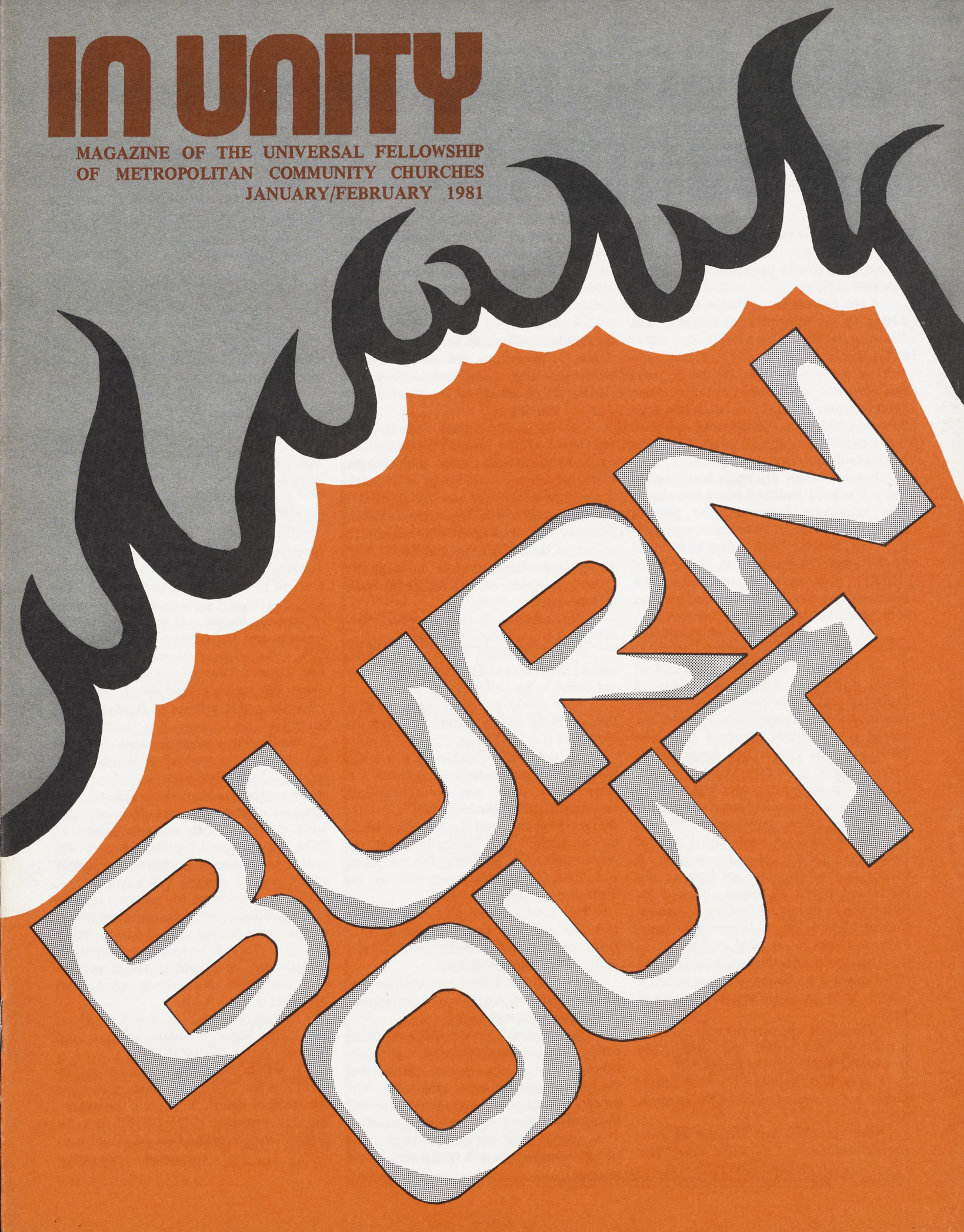


IN UNITY

MAGAZINE OF THE UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP
OF METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1981



SODOM

the bottom line an editorial

t. earlye scott

My father was a newspaper publisher and a good one. He taught me that a person must live by their principles or they signified nothing.

I too believe as my father taught me. Living by my principles has cost me. But the price has always been worth it.

I became a journalist. I not only worked for a newspaper for many years but also was a reporter for United Press International. I taught journalism in a large suburban high school and was in charge of publications there for 10 years. I taught my students freedom of the press.

Because of my principles I quit teaching -- I refused to live a life in the closet. You who have followed "The Bottom Line" for the last 2½ years know my story.

Now, because I still believe in freedom of the press I'm resigning as editor of IN UNITY. For some of you this will be disappointing news. For others of you I'm sure you have been praying for this day.

Let me explain the circumstances under which I am resigning.

In December of 1979, the Board of Elders wanted to appoint me editor. I explained that unless there was an editorial policy and job descriptions I could not accept the position. Instead I became Interim Editor (there had never before been either of these guidelines). In April of 1980 the Elders approved the editorial policy which I wrote and approved the job Descriptions. (See policy page 23 .) The job descriptions made the Board of Elders the publisher; the Liaison Elder an advisor to the editor and go between the editor and Board of Elders. It said the editor was in charge of "getting the magazine published on a bi-monthly basis. Because there is no staff designated to work on the production of In Unity, the editor must be able to edit copy, write articles, write headlines and do lay-out and design.

"The editor will have the responsibility of planning each edition and deciding the format and content of the magazine."

I was then appointed editor unanimously and of course accepted the appointment.

Four months later (because of controversial articles in IN UNITY -- See "The

Trek" by Rev. Shelley Hamilton), the Board of Elders decided to form an editorial board. The Liaison Elder had not informed me that this was in the making but during the Elders Meeting he called me on the phone to see what I thought about it. I told him I could not give an answer unless I knew how the editorial board would function. After discussion with the Board they agreed to wait until their January meeting.

Let me briefly explain what an editorial board is and how it functions. An editorial board consists of the managing editor who is in overall charge of the entire news operation. The managing editor is the final arbitrator in any decision making process. The managing editor is also in charge of the editorial page and the paper's policy, answerable only to the publisher. Other members of the editorial board include section editors.

The publisher is the top executive -- often not a journalist -- often the owner.

In our operation I am the managing editor, the Board of Elders is the publisher, the owner is the UFMCC.

When I took this job I explained all of this carefully to the Elders. In fact I've explained it several times.

The only time a publisher is involved in the actual process of the magazine is in cases where there may be a libel suit. Often times *after* the magazine is printed the publisher may call the managing editor on the carpet. But for the most part the responsibilities of practicing fair journalism and freedom of the press fall on the managing editor's shoulders.

This kind of set up is very efficient and the editorial board functions as a brainstorming and planning group to give input to the managing editor.

The Board of Elders has voted to have an editorial board. But, let me explain how their board will work.

The board will consist of the managing editor, the liaison elder (who is the publisher) and one other person (named but the job not accepted yet -- a minister). The process will be: The managing editor will pick the articles to go into the magazine. The articles will be presented to the editorial board who will read them. Those

two people will then tell the editor if an article can or cannot be printed.

As you can see these two processes are completely opposite of each other. In essence what the Board of Elders has set up is a censorship board with the title of editorial board. It is not an editorial board. Just because they call it that does not make it one.

In addition to setting up this "editorial board" the elders also voted to change the nature of IN UNITY. They are now calling it an "in house organ" instead of a news and opinion journal. Let me explain the difference.

A news and opinion journal gives the reader a variety of information and deals with many issues. It gives all of the perspectives found in UFMCC and reflects the diversity we are so proud of. It is a forum for you to respond and to be heard. You have a voice and a place to make your side of an issue known. It is a place for controversy and for dialogue and for growth. It is a magazine where we can read what our Christian sisters and brothers think about and are concerned about. It is your magazine and it believes in freedom of the press.

An in house organ is much different. This kind of "magazine" is not respected by most journalists because it is a public relations tool. Many high schools have this sort of publication as do many right-wing churches -- an example would be "The Watchtower" by the Jehovah's Witnesses. It is usually a "party line" publication with a limited viewpoint. There obviously is no room for minority opinion (the minority opinion becomes an enemy in the camp rather than the *loyal* opposition.) There is no room for diversity or controversy. It is pabulum for those with weak stomachs. Most say it is not worth the paper it is printed on.

As you can see, the Board of Elders has made some dramatic changes and decisions for us, the UFMCC.

I believe that the publisher of IN UNITY is the General Conference and not the Board of Elders. I believe if the nature, the very purpose of IN UNITY is to be changed then it is the General Conference

continued on next page



IN UNITY

Offices at 5300 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 304, Los Angeles, California 90029

editorial

who should make that decision, and *not* the Board of Elders.

If the Board of Elders want their own magazine then let them begin one but leave IN UNITY to its members, where it belongs.

I do not believe this new publication with its so called editorial board should carry the same name as IN UNITY. IN UNITY died on January 8, 1981. Let it rest in dignity.

You might be interested to know that the Board of Elders also voted to discuss having an "editorial board" for the Gay Christian. I don't need to explain the consequences of that! But, we'd have to hold another funeral!

SO WHAT CAN YOU DO

1. You can write to the Elders demanding to have your magazine back and tell them they can't have it. You can tell them that if you believed in censorship you could join the Moral Majority.
2. You can register your complaint by not subscribing to *their* magazine.
3. At General Conference four elders are up for re-election. You can register your complaint at the polls by voting for people who respect your intelligence and freedom of speech. If you cannot vote, tell your lay delegate and your pastor how concerned you are about this.
4. Write letters to the Gay Christian -- if you do it now they may get printed.
5. You can try writing letters to IN UNITY.
6. Tell everyone you know how IN UNITY has been changed.

I've done what I had to do. What are you going to do?

AFTERTHOUGHT -- Perhaps we ought to start an alternative publication that is not controlled by the Elders. Underground publications always are popular when censorship is popular.

NEWS FLASH -- The new interim editor is president of Evangelicals Together in Southern California. He is not, by the way, a member of MCC.

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BURNOUT AND YOU

BURNOUT
AND THE
NON-PROFESSIONAL
MINISTER
OR
WATCH OUT
LAYPEOPLE --
WE CAN
BURN OUT
TOO!

By Jim Kerber

MCC East Bay

I am a burnout victim. I attended the same workshop at San Francisco State University as the Rev. Claudia Vierra. I learned the same symptoms, causes and cures of burnout and I vowed never to let it happen to me. I tried to change my work pattern, get more rest, get more exercise, eat better and lower my self expectations. I did all this at about half the level I should have. I didn't have time to really take care of myself because I ignored the one part of my life that I thought was burnoutproof -- my church involvement. I saw myself burning out on the job but never dreamed that my over-involvement in the church was contributing to burnout and preventing me from taking the time I needed to heal myself.

It took a long time to come to the above realization. The healing process started last Spring when I attended an Excel weekend in Los Angeles. Seated at my small group table was another potential burnout victim. As she and I talked about our common church responsibilities as choir directors and clerks of our board of directors, I began to see signs of burnout in her. We talked about being too busy to really do each of our tasks as well as we could. We talked about what a hassle these responsibilities were becoming and how we never had time to relax and enjoy time with other members of our congregation.

As the Excel weekend continued and topics of the quality of prayer life, study and leading others to Christ unfolded, this other person and I both came to the same realization that the *quality* of our involvement with our local church was being hampered by the *quantity* of work we were

doing. We decided to return to our churches and do something about it.

When I saw the burnout in her, I began to recognize it in myself. As I shared feelings with her, I began the first step in curing burnout -- sharing with a co-worker or peer. Even though being too busy at church was not the only symptom of my burnout, it was an indication that my whole lifestyle had to be looked at closely. The road out of burnout is a long one and a lot of barriers have to be broken down in order to start over. I'm sharing this because it is much easier to prevent burnout than to cure it after it has happened.

Burnout is not the exclusive malady of the professional. It can also happen to the layperson and frequently does. What is often interpreted as a "religious crisis" in a layperson's life or a falling away from involvement in the church is often burnout in action. I think it is important for both the professional clergy and laypeople to be aware of burnout so that they can minister to each other when they see the symptoms cropping up.

Let me share a few examples of how burnout can affect the layperson:

Case No. 1 -- You are a leader in your church. Because you are recognized as capable, willing and organized, you are asked to take on a lot of responsibilities. You don't really want the added responsibility of "one more job" in the church, but there aren't that many leaders in your church and you know that if you don't do it yourself, it either won't get done or will be done badly. So you give up another evening of your time for one more meeting. Soon you have no free evenings left.

Soon the joy of serving God becomes a burden, but you have faith that God will share that burden and you keep going. You begin pushing to get things done to

make meetings go faster so you can get home sooner. You begin to be short-tempered with people who can't or won't move along at your pace. Whenever you are among members of your congregation, you never seem to have time to socialize or just be friendly.

Instead you are constantly looking for this person whose report is due, or another person to tell them some new development in a project. You begin to find it difficult to quiet down and focus on God during worship services. You begin to wish the worship services would also go faster. You complain about the pastor and feel he or she isn't meeting your expectations or ministering to you. Yet, you never talk about your inner feelings to anyone because they would be interpreted as weakness. You are a victim of burnout.

Case No. 2 -- You are a hard worker in your church. Every time a project is created and workers are needed to implement it, you volunteer to help. Sometimes you want to say "no," but you feel guilty when you think about that, so you just volunteer again. Soon the tasks become monotonous. You begin to feel like people don't appreciate all the work you do because it is often behind the scenes. The work never seems to be finished; there's just always more to do. You begin to resent the people in leadership positions for always coming up with new projects which you know you'll feel you have to volunteer for. You're always exhausted and feel trapped. One day you go away on vacation. When you return, you don't go back to church. You are a victim of burnout.

These two examples of high expectations, constant interaction with people, competition, lack of control over decisions affecting you, these are all causes of burnout and they can happen in our churches. Christians are not exempt from burnout.

You might think at this point that I'm advocating full-scale mutiny on the part of laypeople and that we should all run away from our responsibilities in the church in order to avoid burnout. I'm not.

What I am advocating is for each of you to take a close look at your walk with Christ. How many responsibilities do you have at church? How much joy and fulfillment do you feel performing each job? How much time do you have for quiet meditation? Do you take good care of yourself physically?

As you answer these questions consider the options. If you are overloaded with church work and not resting and not

spending meditation time with God, are you fulfilling your call to be a Christian? Using Christ as our perfect example we see that Christ, busy as he was, took time to rest. Sometimes he too needed to get away from people. Sometimes he needed time for quiet meditation.

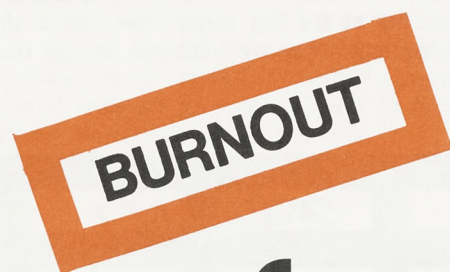
"But," you might say, "who is going to do the work if I don't?" That's a harder question to answer. Perhaps there is someone else in the church who is just waiting to be asked to do something and if you slowed down and got to know more people on a personal basis, you'd discover their gift and need. Or, perhaps one of your jobs in the church isn't a priority

ministry to anyone but you. Perhaps it could be eliminated. I believe God provides a call to workers for jobs that God wants done.

God also calls us to bring others to Christ. How can we do that if we are spending all of our free time at church? How many busy Christians have no friends outside of church or work? How many of us can't bring friends to church because all of our friends are already there? It is important that we show our Christianity to others and share the peace and joy it brings. If we are not at peace with ourselves then we haven't got much peace to share. If we are spending all of our time at church

and never come into contact with people outside the church then how can we share our Christianity?

Elsewhere in this magazine the Rev. Claudia Vierra has shared the causes, symptoms and cures of burnout. I hope each of you will look at your lives and see if any of these are present. Christ calls us to be healthy, committed Christians and to do God's work. Only by eradicating our fear of burnout, looking at it closely and making any necessary changes in our lives will we be free of the negative pattern of burnout and fully able to serve God in all ways.



Caring for yourself

Rev. Dusty Pruitt

When it comes to being a minister, you are your own best friend. Perhaps you've heard about "BURN-OUT." The word has been kicked around the Fellowship for several years. The activity (or syndrome) which the word describes has been around even longer.

Burn-out is like the Big Apple Tree. Some people came by one day and asked it if they could have its apples. "Sure," it replied. So the people took all the apples. Then, the squirrels came by and asked it for its leaves for their nests. The apple tree, good naturedly, gladly gave the leaves away. Stripped bare, it was still strong and healthy. But some other people came by and asked for its limbs for some firewood. The apple tree gave its limbs away, for it was glad to be able to keep people warm. Then some other people asked for its trunk to make some coffee tables. The apple tree sighed but gave them its trunk to make the tables. Finally, someone bought the property on which the apple tree sat. The owner passed the tree and remarked on its ugliness. The next day a person came by with a bulldozer and uprooted the stump. "Did you get that good-for-nothing stump out of the ground?" the owner asked the

bulldozer operator. "Yep," replied the bulldozer operator, "ain't nothing left there but a huge hole in the ground." The moral: The apple tree gave its all for others and then was uprooted as "good-for-nothing" because it had nothing left to give!

This is burn-out! The Ministerial Credentials and Affairs subcommittee on Concerns would like to ask that what happened to the strong, healthy apple tree not happen to you! But the only person who can prevent this from happening to you is you! Here are some suggestions which we feel will help prevent burn-out.

1. Take time for yourself.

a. Some ministers sing and play the piano every morning, others meditate, and others read Scripture, still others pray. Take some time for yourself every morning.

b. Take planned time away from everyone connected with the Church. Be sure to take AT LEAST one day off per week, preferably two. Sundays do not count as one of those two days. Sunday is a work day for ministers. Get

away from the telephone, drop-ins, etc. Do what YOU enjoy doing -- stamp collecting, crossword puzzles, bowling -- nurture yourself and gain strength from being alone or with someone who can nurture you.

2. Pace yourself. Find out what time you need to help keep from "burning out." You can tell when that time is coming when you're ready to throw the phone against the wall the next time it rings. That's the time to take several days and get away. Some ministers have found they can take two consecutive weeks a year -- others need to split up their vacation time to pace themselves - 3-4 days per quarter.

3. Remember that there are few "emergencies" which will require immediate attention (most can wait). And remember that there will always be more people to individually minister to in MCC than you have time to fit in. Avoid the temptation to "go on a guilt trip" or attempts by others to put you on a "guilt trip." Remember the apple tree -- you won't be any good to anyone if you're a stump.

4. Mix daily activities. People oriented activities rarely have good "closure." Therefore, to give yourself a sense of accomplishing something, mix your daily tasks so that you have some tasks which can be "finished" (sermon preparation, errands, bulletin) mixed with counseling and people-oriented activities every day.

CARING continued on page 6

CARING continued from page 5

- Practice good time management. A good suggestion for time management is to divide the days (or week) into 3 (or 21) blocks -- morning, afternoon, and evening, as follows:

There are 21 blocks of time in each week -- the church has a right to expect that you use 14 of them for the church -- and the other 7 should be yours! If you insist on "your" time, burn-out should not be a problem for you.

- Learn to delegate tasks and "emergencies" to other members of the church. Many people only

want to speak with "the pastor," but if they are really in need they will normally talk to a competent layperson such as a deacon or exhorter or other trained layperson.

If you do get "burned-out" --

If you do get burned-out, must you leave the professional ministry? Normally that is not the only alternative you have. You have several alternatives short of leaving the professional ministry.

- Ask your Senior Pastor (if staff) or Board of Directors (if Senior Pastor) for a short leave of absence, such as a month. Normally this leave should be with pay.

- Request a leave of absence (for a year) with the Fellowship.
- Find a place where you can get some nurturing and go there to get it. There are many retreat houses where you can stay for nominal cost and be spiritually nurtured. Try a Catholic retreat house, etc.

We wish you the best -- and hope these suggestions will help you prevent "burn-out" --

We on the MCAC subcommittee on Concerns want to see you as strong and healthy as the Big Apple Tree was in the beginning -- and we want you to stay that way!

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THE GAY CHRISTIAN

A journal of
theological
reflection

from Metropolitan
Community Church

BURNOUT

EDITOR'S NOTE: Rev. Claudia Vierra did an inspired workshop at Western Ministers' Conference some time ago. I was able to attend that workshop. It was at her workshop that I realized I too was burned out from teaching and didn't even know it.

It was also at this workshop that I decided these materials needed to be shared with all of you. Thanks to Rev. Vierra for her workshop hand outs.

CAUSES

1. Intense, difficult, and constant interaction with people you are trying to help.
 - a. some people have little energy and drain yours
 - b. too many contacts/appointments - overload
 - c. difficulty of the cases/appointments you deal with -- the more difficult, the faster the burnout
 - d. giving too much too often
 - e. having the responsibility of life or well being of people
2. Monotony -- doing the same tasks in the same way
 - a. same to you -- seems different to others outside
3. Lack of recognition/support from the community/congregation
 - a. nobody knows or cares that you do a good job
4. High expectations from congregation
 - a. ambiguity or conflicting values
 - b. not sure what you're supposed to do or how
5. A competitive work environment
6. Living and working in the city
7. Crowded, noisy working conditions
 - a. uncomfortable
 - b. lack of confidential space
8. Lack of control over interaction
 - a. little or no say in decisions that affect you
 - b. other person controls
9. Physical fear
10. Lack of training/preparedness for burnout; it is unexpected

11. High ideals and expectations for the self, others and the profession
 - a. "save the world"
 - b. then when withdraw, feel guilty
12. Not seeing successes -- work seems meaningless
13. Compassion and caring leading to over-identification
 - a. "when your heart bleeds"
14. Only being noticed when you do something wrong
 - a. you can't make mistakes
 - b. must be "superhuman"
15. Feel alone/isolated or lack of support from colleagues, ministers, administration
16. Let work cut into personal time
 - a. interruptions at home
17. Being judged by what happens to the other person -- making it "your responsibility"
18. Underpaid for ability, experience, education
19. Lack of regular days off and vacation
 - a. having to "pay" when you do take time off

SYMPTOMS

- * 1. Loss of concern or emotional feeling for the parishioner, client, student
 - a. protection for self so it won't be necessary to care as much - doesn't work
- * 2. Distancing from parishioner, client, student
 - a. come to work late and leave early
 - b. try to avoid conflict
 - c. shorter office hours
 - d. fail to return phone calls
 - e. find reasons for not going to work
3. Negative attitude towards people
 - a. cynical and negative
 - b. suspicious of motives of people
 - c. "They deserve it"
 - d. "They're not really trying"

4. Dehumanization of parishioner, client, student
 - a. derogatory labels
 - b. large, abstract terms
 - c. use of jargons or labels to describe people
5. Want to be less with people generally
- * 6. Lose temper easily -- yell at people
 - a. frequent feelings of anger/unexpected bursts of anger
 - b. frequent feeling of envy -- "they have it good"
7. Pay is more in other parts of life than work
 - a. anticipate weekends
 - b. depressed Monday mornings
 - c. can't wait to get home
- * 8. Feeling trapped
 - a. feeling worthless, easily rejected, despair, hopelessness
 - b. "If I leave . . . who will do it?"
9. Pessimistic about work and the world in general
 - a. everything is bad/wrong
10. Increased reliance on crutches
 - a. alcohol, drugs, smoking, over-eating, television
- * 11. Chronic exhaustion
 - a. from stress
 - b. unexpectedly tearful
12. Sleep disturbances
 - a. very upset when going to sleep
 - b. nightmares
 - c. insomnia
13. Weakened physically -- catch cold easily
14. Overreaction of slight provocation
15. Easily distracted
16. Increased marital/spouse/family conflict
 - a. temper
 - b. less patience
17. Psychosomatic symptoms
 - a. stomach upset
 - b. trembling or tremor
 - c. restlessness -- can't sit still
 - d. eyestrain
 - e. feeling of not being able to get enough air

BURNOUT continued on page 21

BURNOUT - BURNOUT - BURNOUT

WHERE DOES GOD FIGURE IN YOUR SUPPORT SYSTEM

By Chris Messenger
MCC London, England

As a UFMCC Elder's spouse, and a social worker by profession, "Burn-out," to me, is not just a fancy American bit of jargon for the stage of disillusionment that afflicts others in the helping professions. It's a very real emotional state which all of us who work with people have to recognise and learn to cope with. For those of us who are Christian carers, I suspect it's even harder to recognise and accept that we might be in, or approaching, a stage of burn-out. It's difficult to admit that we might be reacting to the emotional stress which continued involvement with troubled human beings brings about, especially when we claim, "The Lord God is my strength" (Habakkuk 3:19) and believe with St. Paul (2 Cor. 9:8) when he says, "God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that you, always having sufficiency in all things, may abound in every good work!"

Burn-out varies in the degree it affects different people and different professions. Those of us who are laity know only too well when it affects our Ministers and leaders, and we are usually quick to criticize rather than support and facilitate. Are we quick enough to recognise the distancing techniques and little devices that we each employ to help us cope with our daily lives, I wonder? Working on the principle that we are all ministers and that, as Christians, we are aiming to interact lovingly with our fellow human beings, I think we all risk experiencing some of the more common burn-out symptoms from time to time.

Maybe you don't have parishioners, clients, patients, as such, to care for so you don't find yourself adopting a cynical and negative attitude towards them and thinking of ways to avoid contact with them, or of answering the phone. I'm pretty sure, however, that there are few amongst you who are bothering to read this, who have not at some time found it difficult to make decisions; spent hours agonising over which

shoes to wear, or whether to go to the bank before or after lunch. You may get the feeling that you are not in control of your life; that you are trapped and feel an air of pessimism about your work and the world in general.

Most of us dither about decisions in the belief that time will come to our aid, but putting off decisions doesn't make them any easier. If anything, it makes them harder, and we often keep churning over the same old pros and cons until we are going around in circles. We procrastinate like mad - "Procrastination is the thief of time," said Edward Young, and when we are tired and under stress we often cease to use time wisely. Procrastination is so dreadfully painfully negative. It's living in a form of suspense 24 hours a day and never releasing the tension. It's not only mentally draining, but just as energy releases more energy, so doing nothing is also physically exhausting.

In a bid to avoid doing what really matters, we'll concentrate furiously on what doesn't, depleting our energies and pretending to ourselves that we're really frantically busy. I did this a lot before getting down to write this article! Rather than start writing, I decided to clean the car and comb the cats. After a while, though, you should be able to recognise your own danger signals. Once you start fiddling, re-organising and doing unnecessary jobs, like arranging your underwear in order of colour, or tidying your paper clips, stop and ask yourself what you're trying to avoid.

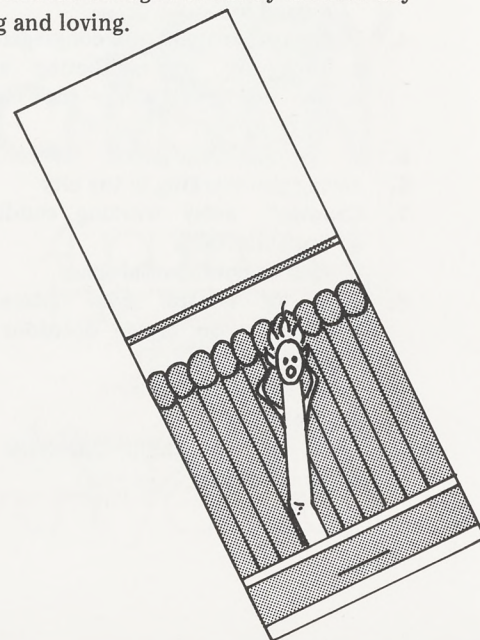
We are so lucky as Christians to have the extra strength and guidance of God's Holy Spirit to help us devise our own personal strategy to organise ourselves better and deal with any burn-out symptoms which might arise. Starting the day with Christ means we can put away old thoughts and habits and live for "Today." St. Paul reminds us that "if anyone is in Christ, that person is a new creature; the old has passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. 5:17).

With Christ, we can take on too much and get it done. Sometimes, only when we are hard pressed, do our priorities become

clear, enabling us to make decisions quickly and effectively. With Christ, we can set targets which are realistic and can be met. Attainable goals will inspire us, whilst impossible ones cause us despair and certain failure. With Christ, we can learn to say "no" pleasantly but firmly without giving offense and creating a scene. Learning to say "no" means we can cut out those time-consuming things which other people impose on us and which prevents us from reaching our own goals. Unless we learn to turn them down we'll end up doing other people's work and increasing our own chance of burning-out.

As Christians, it's vital that we don't expose ourselves to temptation! Recognising our main distractions and side-stepping them is an important stage in coping with personal stress. Besides having God in our support system, most of us need other measures, such as regular holidays when we can relax and recharge our batteries; physical exercise, or a hobby. Sleep by itself is usually not enough, as emotional weariness brings with it a mental agony which does not let you sleep easily.

We can all excuse ourselves by saying, "I'm only human," but it's also true that we have a divine self; a Christlike self which lifts us up and away from those areas and processes which bring about burn-out. The more Christ figures in our support system, the less likely we are to burn out, but, in addition, we first need to recognise our own particular reactions to stress and to accept that we need to release the tensions brought about by modern day living and loving.



ONE DAY AT A TIME

By Betty A. Brolsma

One day at a time with my questions and fears
One day at a time with my sorrows and tears
One day at a time when I don't understand
One day at a time, only this is at hand.

When the days of my life
Are upset and in doubt
When the course of my days
Is not stable and clear
When uprooted I am
And in limbo I feel
When the pattern's not worked out
As I think it should be
When the wounds are too fresh
And my soul is too raw
To deal with the future
As still an unknown
Then one-day-at-a-time
I must grasp on and hold
For one-day-at-a-time
Is all I can mold.

When there seems to be nothing
But tumult for me
When each step that I take
Is unsteady, unsure
When each movement forward
Seems to equal three back
When I feel I'm set free
But the past takes its toll
When tomorrow seems like
An unreachable place
And I wonder if ever
I'll find my own space,
Then one-day-at-a-time

One day at a time with my questions and fears
One day at a time with my sorrows and tears
One day at a time when I don't understand
One day at a time, only this is at hand.

When my contact with God
Seems fragile at best
When the steps of my journey
Go the long way around
When direction from God
Seems clouded, not clear
When I try hard to listen
But static gets in the way
When my mind is so cloudy
I can't find words to pray
When attempts to reach God
Seem in lost time and space
Then one-day-at-a-time

One day at a time with my questions and fears
One day at a time with my sorrows and tears
One day at a time when I don't understand
One day at a time, only this is at hand.

But in the same way
When my pathway seems clear
When first steps have been made
And they seem to be right
When my heart reaches God
And I know that God hears
When God guards me from harm
In spite of myself
When my spirit is free
To reach out and grow
When my vistas are opening
And I'm eager to learn
When the future is brightening
And the path seems to grow straight
Still one-day-at-a-time

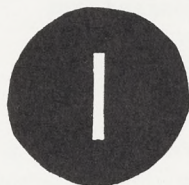
One day at a time with my questions and fears
One day at a time with my sorrows and tears
One day at a time when I don't understand
One day at a time, only this is at hand.

Let all praise be to God
For God gives me each day
Though one may seem many
And that far away
All praise for each moment
In God's marvelous grace
Though seconds seem hours
And my steps seem to drag
All praise for God's mercy
Based in unending love
Love I can't understand
With my human-bound mind
And though I do know
God's love and mercy don't end
Still my spirit cries out
That I don't comprehend
Still one-day-at-a-time

One day at a time with my questions and fears
One day at a time with my sorrows and tears
One day at a time when I don't understand
One day at a time, only this is at hand.

One day at a time as my spirit soars on
One day at a time as my hope seems to grow
One day at a time as the journey goes on
One day at a time only this can I know.

Feedback



Editor, IN UNITY:

I herewith register my weariness with the continuing barrage of distorted (one supposes intentionally) characterizations and cheap trashings of those of us in MCC who are theological liberals. The insensitivity and foolishness seems somehow capped by the rhetoric surrounding the choice of a General Conference theme and reaction to a recent article in this magazine by Shelley Hamilton.

Some of us, having been tactless to inquire in what way the chosen Conference theme differs from recent words by the Rev. Bailey Smith, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, are now being publicly trashed as godless enemies in the camp of the faithful. But our question still awaits a satisfactory answer. Consider both statements:

Acts 4:12 declares, "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among humankind by which we must be saved." Mr. Smith declared, "I'm telling you, all other gods besides Jehovah and his son Jesus Christ are strange gods . . . with all due respect for those dear people, my friend, God almighty does not hear the prayer of the Jew, for how in the world can God hear the prayer of a man who says Jesus Christ is not the true Messiah? It is blasphemous."

Now the name "Jesus Christ" is plenty important to me. You can't understand me, or my salvation, without it, whether or not I choose to deify a first-century Palestinian male, precisely. But does the embracing of Christian faith mean accepting the position that all other symbol systems than our own lead somewhere other than to God and Truth? If I cannot accept what I consider the chauvinism of the Conference theme, do I therefore deserve to be characterized, along with all the rest of us who can't accept it, as "an enemy in the camp," someone who, also in the words of the New Freedom Evangelistic Team preacher who bespoke himself at a District

Conference in Kansas City recently, "have gotten a taste of salvation (and) all of a sudden turning on my savior, wanting to take him out of the bylaws?" C'mon. Do we need that? Do we really want a denomination that seems determined to preserve intact an unreconstructed fundamentalism that refuses to hear other voices or acknowledge the validity of anybody else's experience of God? Do we well serve one another, or the world, with simplistic rhetorical formulations devoid of any trace of critical thought?

If my sister Shelley is not correct when she asserts that "the Father God in the sky and the round, warm Earth Goddess are one and the same," and if only Christian dogma can truly lead this aching world to life and salvation, then it must be that heaven is deprived of those of God's children who are most of the world's population, and that whatever place of condemnation as may exist is provided with a far more interesting population than the dogmatist bores who make heaven. The injustice of it! (It parallels the injustice of depriving church members of Shelley's entire article.)

Do the fundamentalists of UFMCC really want to say that God speaks only from Mount Sinai, eschewing Mounts Kenya and Fuji and all those other holy places persons have known, particularly the deep places of the heart where some of us imagine God yet speaking to us?

I am perfectly happy to live and let the fundamentalist live, too. I reserve the right to argue with her or him, but it does not seem to me that I may call him or her an enemy in the camp who has turned on my savior. I don't think it's too much to expect the same in return. The planet is now too small to accomodate a race determined to denigrate the precious faith visions and spiritual journeys of those whose lived experience affords them different views of the holy than our own. The times require instead that we abandon our long-held fear of hearing new truth, seeing another vision, gaining an unexpected experience of the holy.

F. Jay Deacon
Chicago



Dear Editor,

Would you please tell me why the By-Laws Statement of Faith with all its sexist language is printed in its entirety on

pages 2 and 3 of the Nov./Dec. issue of IN UNITY? So many of us in the Fellowship have struggled for years and years to discover and to teach inclusive ways of stating Christian orthodoxy. I in particular have worked very hard to come up with alternative ways of presenting the truth of the Trinity. The Elders' Task Force on Inclusive Language has done a wonderful job in compiling some of this work and attempting to reach a Fellowship-wide consensus on inclusive theology and liturgy.

All of these efforts are severely undermined when members and newcomers pick up the Fellowship magazine and see God talked about only in masculine terminology. Members of my congregation have commented to me, "I thought we were using inclusive language in MCC." I have tried to explain to them that we are trying to reach a Fellowship-wide consensus through this task force before we officially change the Statement of Faith, but using sexist language in the meanwhile only adds fuel to the fire.

While I am on the subject, I cannot understand why, in Troy Perry's editorial, he uses a sexist translation of Matthew 28:18-20. Whenever I have read or heard *anything* from Troy, it has been inclusive. Doesn't IN UNITY have a policy about inclusive language?

As you can surmise, I am deeply disturbed that just as the Task Force on Inclusive Language is making so much progress that we are taking a step back.

Yours in the name of our boundless God who is beyond gender,

The Rev. Jeffrey D. Pulling
Oakland, California

Editors Comment: The Elders voted in their December meeting that the Statement Of Faith must be printed in IN UNITY. I chose not to put it in inclusive language because of the work the Task Force on Inclusive Language is doing. I did not want to pre-empt their work. I was also informed by Rev. Troy Perry that the by-laws cannot be changed except by a two thirds vote of the General Conference.

I take responsibility for the sexist language in Rev. Perry's article. While editing for inclusivity I totally missed it. Sorry. Thank you for your concern.

Feedback

clergy corner

Reflections of a "New" Pastor

By Rev. Johannes W. Kuiper

Perhaps I should have given this article the title "The Culture Shock of a New MCC Pastor," for that is indeed what it was to this former Calvinistic, Dutch Reformed pastor. But I might add immediately; it was a pleasant "culture shock," a liberation of the highest kind. During the 10 years that I pastored churches in New Jersey and New York, I had come to realize that my favorite quote also applied to many aspects of the mainline Christian churches: "Just because a mouse lives in a cookie jar, that doesn't make him a cookie!" I sure found that out when my superiors and colleagues put me on trial for the "offensive lifestyle of homosexuality."

Remember the saying: "If you were arrested for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?" I decided to change it in my case. I was being tried for being a Gay Christian, and was there enough evidence to convict me? I am happy to report that there was enough evidence, I was convicted! For what? Well, in the first place I had the audacity to preach that God loves *all* people. In the second place, I had dared to offer my sexuality to God in thanksgiving. And, in the third place, I was bold enough

to adhere to something the Dutch Reformed Church and many other denominations have put on paper, but don't dare to put into practice: "... there is always more light to break forth from the Bible through the work of the Holy Spirit." Yes, I affirmed that the God, who was revealed in Jesus Christ, foretold in the Old Testament, presented in the New Testament and proclaimed by the Church in every age and in every land, is still a revealing God today. "Behold, I make all things new."

For years I had been part of a church which really talked about a Living Word, but acted as if it was a dead word. In my studies and my private devotions, I had discovered that wherever you find God operating, you will discover dead things, especially dead people, coming ALIVE in Jesus Christ! Scripture teaches that every person born into this world is born biologically alive, but spiritually dead. "The soul that sins shall die." That means that sin separates us from God, and that accounts for the mess and the problems in this world. I found myself part of a church that was asking us to do living things. We were asking dead people to do living things. We walked up to a person, who was spiritually dead, and said: "Look, you're supposed to love everyone!" But we never helped that person come spiritually alive first....

The Bible also teaches that the fruit of the Spirit, which is God's life, is LOVE. Love is life.... To ask a dead person to produce living fruit is asking the impossible. When you are spiritually dead, you do not have the ability to love. There is no way you can have peace, mercy, justice,

love, patience, temperance, trust and goodness AS LONG AS YOU HAVE DEAD PEOPLE TRYING TO PRODUCE IT! No way!

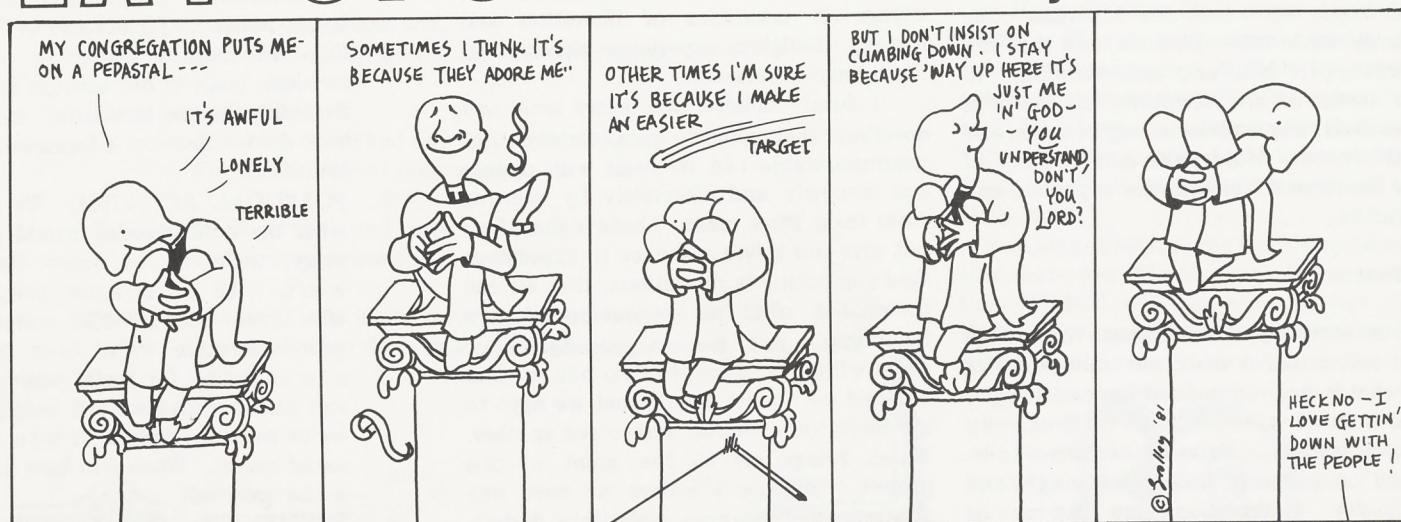
So when it was God's time for me, God took me by the hand and brought me to MCC. Yes, in a way, this mouse left the cookie jar and stopped pretending he was a cookie. Instead I became proud to be a mouse... proud to be myself, created in the image of God. And then I finally started to know God. Not some god packaged in Madison Avenue trappings, stuffed full of person-made doctrines and riddles, but the God of whom the 139th Psalm so eloquently speaks: "God, how hard it is to grasp your thoughts! How impossible to count them! I could no more count them than I could the sand, and suppose I could, You would still be with me!... Such knowledge is beyond my understanding, a height to which my mind cannot attain." My blinders had been removed. I was free to respond to God, not according to the rules and regulations pumped into me by some denomination, but according to the way God was pleased to be revealed through the power of the Holy Spirit. And I remember very well that first time I sang, with all the gusto I could find in me: "Our God is not a woman, our God is not a man. Our God is both and neither. Our God is 'I Who Am.' From all the roles that bind us, our God has set us free. What freedom does God give us? The freedom just to be."

At that conference in New York City, I knew that God had brought me "home."

CLERGY continued on page 13

LAY-UPS

by Jean Gralley





UFMCC's Commission on Faith, Fellowship and Order

Compiled By

Rev. Brenda Cisneros-Hunt

The purpose in theologizing is to: aid people who seek understanding of their faith, authentic worship and celebration, effective openness to God's concern for the world, and an infusion of that faith in life and work and in ministries that support love and justice.

The purpose or task then, of the Commission on Faith, Fellowship and Order becomes one of facilitating those ideals. Ideally what we, (FFO) want to do is explore with you a free and productive inquiry into that purpose. There are three main sources and guidelines for expressing Christian theology; scripture, tradition and experience.

Scripture:

The Bible is the unique testimony of God's self and self-disclosure in the world's creation, redemption and final fulfillment, in Jesus the Christ as the incarnation of God's word, in the Holy Spirit's constant activity in our development. The Bible is the primitive source of images, memories and hopes by which the Christian community came into existence, and that still nourishes its faith and understanding. In the study of the scripture, our faith is nourished, our understanding deepens, and both the core of our faith and the range of our theological opinions are expanded and enriched.

Tradition:

In every age Christians have formulated and reformulated their, our understanding of what is received in doctrines and liturgies that interact upon each other. Most every church tradition professes themselves to be based on scripture for original insight and authority. Traditions are residue of corporate experiences of earlier Christian

communities. There are three 'types' of traditions in the religious realm: a. *traditions as historic process* whereby Christian memories and their interpretations aid in reinterpreting the Christian message and meaning from person to person, generation to generation. b. *traditions as sociological phenomena*, there are specific differentiations within denominations or between them that serve as a partial aid in denominations being able to identify themselves and one another. c. *transcendent tradition*. Within this scope of tradition, those of us who have been separated or isolated by various barriers, sex, sexuality, race, etc., can recognize one another as Christians together.

Experience:

Christian experience is not only profoundly private, but also corporate and active. Scripture does not speak about a solitary experience, but rather God's love is to be shared if it is to survive. Christian experience then carries the imperative to engage in ministries of liberation and healing. Religious experience affects all of the human experiences.

I firmly believe that every issue and question that would seem divisive and insurmountable can be dealt with openly and honestly and effectively by drawing from these three areas. I believe that if we but give our selves a chance to experience God's continuous revelations, that we can accomplish what we set out to do as a fellowship. But, we can only do that if we're willing to listen, to hear one another out and be honest about what we have to say about one another and to one another. Which brings me to the point of this project. Because I believe we need one another, your concerns, aspirations, desires, opinions, etc., are very important to the

work of this commission. I have listed six areas of questions and would like your personal response. Please direct all correspondence to FFO c/o MCC Detroit, 45 East Adams, Detroit, Michigan 48226.

1. **WORSHIP:** Are we going to engage in the struggle of developing a more profound sense of ministry vs becoming self-serving and comfortable. AFTER only eleven years we already have some "old-value" systems that some have brought from their background. Others developed in the 11 years - can we meet the changes around us and become the "new-church?"
2. **MINISTRY:** We've declared we (UFMCC) accept the "priesthood of all believers" and acknowledge that lay people are ministers in the true sense - how are we going to train them for it? We're called to be a pluralistic church in an age of increasing polarization and fragmentation. To minister in the 80's will require clarity in our message, goals in our mission and flexibility in our structure. But, how do we develop a framework for belief?
3. **POLITICAL ACTIVISM:** We all wish the controversies would go away, most of us know they won't. All of us know people who have left UFMCC congregations because we've been too slow in acting for social justice - and others who have left because we've been too quick to take up social causes. When and how can we be involved?
4. **ECUMENISM:** Can the question
FFO continued on page 17



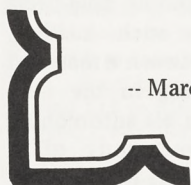
Psalm 139



(Verses 1-14, 22-23)

- L: O God, you examine me and know me.
You know when I sit and when I stand.
- R: You understand my thoughts from far away,
You see me when I am resting and on the go,
And every detail of my conduct you know well.
- L: For the word is not yet formed on my tongue, O God,
Before you know it exactly.
- R: You enclose me in front and behind,
And lay your hand upon me.
- L: Such knowledge is too overpowering for me,
A height my mind cannot reach.
- R: Where could I escape from your Spirit?
And where could I go away from your Presence?
- L: If I climb the heavens, you are there.
If I make my bed in the underworld, you are there, too!
- R: If I fly from the dawn in the east
To the farthest sea in the west,
Even there your hand will be leading me,
And your right hand will be holding me.
- L: If I say, "Let darkness cover me
And the light around me be night,"
Even darkness will not be dark to you.
- R: Night will shine as the day;
Darkness and light are the same to you.
- L: You created my inmost self,
And knit me together in my mother's womb.
- R: I give you thanks
For the wonder and awe of your making me,
For the wonder of your works.
- L: Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Test me and know my thoughts.
- R: See whether I walk in the way that leads to evil,
And lead me in the way that is everlasting.

-- Marcia Geyer



CLERGY continued from page 11

In a way I had arrived, yet I had a long way to go. Before too long I realized that vividly. As I started out to begin a new congregation in Albany, I learned about such issues as inclusivity, sexism, racism, *In Unity* and *The Gay Christian*. It didn't take long to have my head spinning. I was getting involved in a real church. In January I began the work in Worcester, and in April . . . Angelo and I walked those beautiful, painful, wonderful, agonizing, enervating, tiring, loving and controversial miles between Jacksonville and Tallahassee. A recent issue of *In Unity* vividly described the many facets of that Walk of Faith.

To make a long story short, when I look at my first year and a half in MCC and at the churches that I have visited on my TV tours, and I couple that with the experience of grappling with the issues before us . . . then I realize that our UFMCC may turn the strength of our diversity into divisiveness. I speak from experience as I come out of a denomination that was split in an East/West fashion. In our diversity we must not fail to allow God's Spirit to breathe on us, and that means ALL of us, to keep us alive We are here to proclaim the Good News that God loves *all* people. We are here to follow the teachings of Jesus, the Christ. We stand within the mainstream of Christianity, but let us not become another "mainline church," suffocated by dogma and doctrine. Remember the story of Moses and the burning bush? Today that same God says: "I need human bushes that will burn for me I need people in whom I can burn my life." God needs us to be God's vehicles of love, instruments of peace, through which God can be expressed. God wants to take our lives and burn through them . . . to purify them . . . to create in us a climate of the Holy Spirit. God wants to set us ablaze. If you were arrested today for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you? The answer will be YES, if we are open to the fact that "There is always more Light to break forth from the Bible through the work of the Holy Spirit."

A long time ago, the world proclaimed that there was "No Room." Let us pledge that UFMCC will never say it, but that through the power of the Holy Spirit there will always be room! Amen!



CON

Q A A

WASHINGTON, D.C. - A newly created national political action committee, the Human Rights Campaign Fund, has been established to contribute to and assist those federal candidates committed to equal justice and civil rights for lesbians and gay men. The Human Rights Campaign Fund (HRCF), which will engage in direct partisan political activities such as making financial contributions to candidates, will be an independent, separate organization although it will work very closely with the Gay Rights National Lobby, the only full-time lobby at Congress for gay civil rights.

One of the motivations for the establishment of the Human Rights Campaign Fund is the mobilization of the "Moral Majority," "Christian Voice," and the rest of the "New Christian Right." They are establishing PACs, registering voters in their churches, interjecting their own brand of "morality" into this year's Congressional campaigns. These groups are determined

to defeat many of those with the courage to sponsor or support gay civil rights legislation.

Steve Endean, who played a key role in founding HRCF, is on the Board, and is also the Executive Director of the Gay Rights National Lobby, said, "By standing behind our friends in Congress, working to defeat those that oppose civil rights for gay people, and identifying 'open seats' that could mark a pick-up for pro-justice forces, the Human Rights Campaign Fund could signal a new level of development of gay/lesbian participation and sophistication in the electoral political process.

The Human Rights Campaign Fund has created a national Advisory Committee of political, religious, labor and community leaders including: Julian Bond, long-time civil rights leader; Mayor Donald Fraser, Minneapolis; Gloria Steinem, leading feminist; Bishop Otis Charles, Episcopal Diocese of Utah; Mayor Diane Feinstein, San Francisco; Rabbi Richard Sternberger, President of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations; Iris Mitgang, National Chair of National Women's Political Caucus; Dr. John Spiegel, former President of the American Psychiatric Association; Mayor Marion Barry, Washington, D.C.; Bella Abzug, leading feminist and former Congressperson; Michael Harrington, author of "The Other America" (which was basis of "Great Society"); Patsy Mink, national President of Americans for Democratic Action; Joseph Rauh, legal Counsel of Leadership Conference on Civil Rights; and Bishop Wesley Frensdorff, Episcopal Diocese of Nevada (partial list).

Responding to the argument that the gay and lesbian movement should not become "political" and contribute to candidates, Endean said, "For better or worse, politics and elected officials will play a role in deciding the outcome of our

fight. Elected officials will decide whether or not to repeal antiquated immigration laws against gays. And, of course, elected officials will decide on anti-gay amendments."

Endean urged that contributions and monthly pledges be sent to the Human Rights Campaign Fund: H.R.C.F., Post Office Box 1396, Washington, D.C. 20013.

Because the Human Rights Campaign Fund is a political action committee, individuals may take an income tax credit for contributions. They may claim a tax credit of 50% of the amount given up to \$100 (\$200 for a joint return). So a \$50 contribution costs only \$25.

GAY HOMICIDES IN LOS ANGELES

By Dan Doughty

The first of a series of meetings in Los Angeles between the gay and lesbian community and civic leaders was recently held. There were representatives from all factions of the gay and lesbian community. Present were City Councilperson Zev Yaroslavsky, representatives from the offices of City Councilperson Peggy Stevenson and County Supervisor Ed Edelman. Also attending were Jerry Feinberg, Chief Detective LAPD Homicide and Jim Morgan, Chief Detective of the LA Sheriff's Homicide Division.

The meetings were called to discuss how the gay communities of Hollywood and West Hollywood can assist the police in preventing the rising number of gay related "homicides."

Since January, 1980, there have been 16 gay related murders and numerous attempted murders in the heavily gay populated areas of Hollywood and West Hollywood. In depth investigations by the Homicide Divisions of LAPD and LASD have labeled 16 murders as "Gay Homicides."

Of the 16 reported homicides, two were considered "lovers quarrels," three were "S&M" related, where one of the partners, willingly or unwillingly met with death at the hands of his sexual partner. All five suspects in these murders have been arrested and two have been prosecuted.

The remainder of the homicides were for numerous reasons, including drug deals and prostitution. One such incident involved a price dispute between a man and a male prostitute, resulting in the man being stabbed to death in his automobile.

The badly decomposed body of a bound man was found hanging by a leather

noose in his apartment. The police were able to determine that he had bound himself, climbed a ladder, and slipped. No evidence to suggest suicide was found. There were no marks or bruises to indicate a struggle or foul play. What had at first appeared to police to be a homicide was later determined an accidental death.

The series of homicides has been a frightening experience for some residents of Hollywood and West Hollywood. The rumors surrounding these deaths led to these meetings. A new "Rumor Control Department" was set up at the Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center to assist the community with police relations. You can visit the center at 1213 N. Highland, Los Angeles, CA 90038, or phone them at (213) 464-7400 ext. 201.

Crime has no prejudice regarding race, color, sexuality or sexual preference. Crimes happen among all of us and must concern all of us. We must all make a concentrated effort, along with God's help, to create more crime-free communities in which to live.

We must be more aware of our relationships (overnight or otherwise) and keep an eye out at all times for strange or out of place happenings.

Advertisement

SHARING AND GROWING

By Rev. Richard R. Mickley, M.A.

Rev. Mickley has taken a leave of absence to obtain a doctor's degree in Clinical Psychology.

He has obtained his master's degree in counseling psychology and his master's thesis is a handbook of enrichment ideas intended for use as a self-help manual for gay men in a committed relationship, or for those who wish they were, or for those who counsel men in committed gay relationships.

The thesis offers a smorgasbord of ideas for sharing and growing together in a way that will enrich their relationship and their lives. It applies sound techniques of marriage therapy and recognizes and interprets factors that are distinctively pertinent to gay men, such as male bonding, high rapport and escalating symmetry.

210 typewritten pages containing self-help ideas for making your relationship what you want it to become, whatever you want it to become.

Special price for In Unity readers. Send \$15 to SHARING and GROWING, Dept. I, Box 2645, Los Angeles, CA 90051.

Inquiries welcome from bookstores

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON FAMILIES

Adele Starr, Delegate

Those of us representing the gay community at the conference spent most of our time in the workshops preventing anti-gay proposals from being passed - and we had some very tense moments and close votes. For example:

In the Media and Government workshop a proposal actually passed the first round as follows:

"Media portrayals of family life should not include glamorizing of the practice of homosexuals. Responsible heterosexuality and heterosexual marriage as a norm and foundation of civilization, should be the standard for the media to adhere to."

When the proposal reached the 2nd level of voting we managed to change it to the following:

"All media must present views in a balanced manner on all issues of concern. American families rest on a foundation of diversity. Such diversity is solely lacking in the models provided by the mass media both in advertising and in the content of entertainment fare, much of which ridicules strong family relations and provides negative roles for children and other family members. Stereotypical portrayals are particularly destructive and dangerous."

This was passed 59-46 and reached the 3rd and final round of voting as is and passed again.

In my workshop - Family and Government, I proposed the following: "The government should bar all discrimination against gay persons in the military, the C.I.A. and F.B.I., etc." After several heated derogatory remarks by a delegate, it did pass 18-11. However, it got lost in the next voting when 3 out of 10 proposals were selected.

A ban on discrimination in housing because of sexual preference became part of a proposal that passed the final round.

*Ms.
Birdie
Says:*

KIDS COUNT!

Do You Have A Sunday School?

Do You Have A Children's Time During Service?

Do You Have A Youth Program?

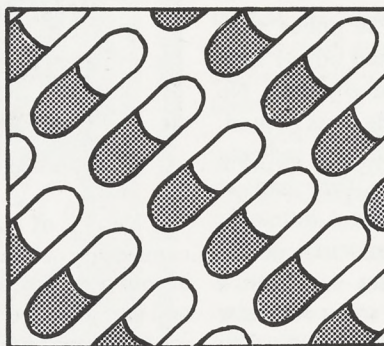
Do You Have Kids In Church?



Ms. Birdie, who did the children's sermon at General Conference, thinks these are important questions. If you have materials aimed at the youth of UFMCC, the Christian Education Department would appreciate copies to be made available to all of our churches. WE CARE.

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THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF UFMCC

absolutely free again



By Ruth Gough

"Where are those blue capsules you told me about?" There it was again. The same old merry-go-round for me. As I saw it, life was not treating me too well, again, and it sure felt better to just be high.

For 10 of my 14 years of getting high, I had been in love with speed in any form. Getting through college, the army, several jobs and moving around a lot was so much nicer while loaded.

In 1964 I discovered how good it felt to smoke pot. Everything was a festive occasion if I had a little smoke. I hated hang-overs, so drinking was always clouded by that. Then in 1968, a classmate -- I used to call him a "friend" -- turned me on to "whites." I discovered new energy, more endurance and a feeling of power. Most of my classmates and neighbors didn't get high, so I also had a wonderful secret. They weren't used to people who got wired or stoned so they couldn't tell I was high.

In college, I found a whole new drug culture. I was introduced to hash and acid -- both of which I loved. On acid, I could leave all of reality and, I thought, get closer to God. Acid remained a week-end high throughout the years. I felt that acid and alcohol were the only two chemicals I could not control. What I didn't stop to look at was that I wouldn't go a week without getting high on something. If it wasn't a problem, why couldn't I quit? I used the reason that I liked getting high, but didn't look at the fact that I didn't grow by getting high. The way I was as a person on January 1st of one year was the same way I was on January 1st of the following year. Somewhere inside I knew that growth was what my life was supposed to be about, but I just wasn't doing it.

I could list all the pains that came from my addiction to a high, but unless you're there, some of them will mean nothing to you. Probably, the most painful, though, was in looking at people whom

I considered to be really growing through life and feeling unable to totally be there with them. I felt a terrible loneliness sometimes that ate me up, finally. As soon as I found out that one of those people got high, too, I could rationalize that it was really okay for me to do it.

I believe that there is a difference, though. I have one friend now who "occasionally" -- once or twice a year -- smokes dope and that's okay for her. I can't do that! The only way for me to judge myself on that is for me to honestly look at myself and come to a conclusion.

Two years ago I had been involved with MCC for five years. At that point in my life I had come to shooting speed into my veins. I walked into my home one day and five narcotics officers were standing there questioning my lover. I had never been arrested before that day. On that day, I decided that I needed help. I had been very up front with people in MCC about getting high and some had tried to help, but they couldn't. I had to do it.

I left MCC and went into a 12 Step drug program. I stayed clean for 16 months. The problem was that I was doing it for the rewards -- recognition as a black woman, a position as a leader on the Staff and approval from others. Finally, when my sexuality was put on the line, I left. I knew that my motives had been wrong because the first thing I did was to start getting involved in chemicals again -- alcohol and pot.

Then God stepped in and introduced me to Rev. Jean Hart. She offered me friendship and absolutely nothing else -- no great rewards! I was blown away. No promises. It was up to me entirely to be honest with myself, make a decision and stick with it. She was there to listen, to sit and drink coffee if I wanted -- to be a friend. As if that weren't enough, God sent another woman who had been in my life before in MCC. This woman shot down all my notions of having to prove something and said, "I want to be your

friend." She had been someone whom I had put on a pedestal five years ago. It wasn't important to be sober or not. She just wanted to be my friend!

Today I have been clean and sober for three months because *I want to be*. The desire to get high is still there -- naturally. (Fourteen years is not blotted out in three months.) I have something more than getting high, though. Part of it is in my self-esteem. The other part is in knowing that I have something to offer you if you can honestly say that you have a problem.

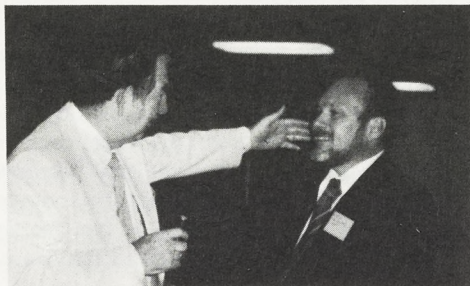
During the time that I have been sober, both in the distant and recent past, I have watched my lesbian sisters and gay brothers in the clubs and I have felt pain. I've looked into the eyes of many and have felt their pain. With all that we, as a people, have to struggle against, I can't see going into it not being fully aware or hiding from anything. I have seen many of my lesbian sisters and gay brothers die -- not only physically, but emotionally -- behind chemicals through their own addictions or the addiction of someone who was close. As a community of Christian believers, God must be our only Higher Power to become spiritually victorious. As long as chemicals are my priority -- the way to get through the day or night, the way to begin communication, the way to really enjoy music or dancing, the way to relax then God is not my Higher Power nor my only security.

For some people, getting high may be fine, but there are those of us who, when we *honestly* and with a clear head, look at ourselves, know that there is a better way. For us -- for me, there is no real sense of absolute freedom and security until we turn our backs on chemicals, face and deal with reality, and reach out to another person to say, "Help!" It isn't easy to admit weakness and pain to another person, but that's part of honesty and "The truth shall set us free!"

FFO continued from page 12

be put simply as; either we have a common future with other believers or not at all? Do we really have an idea of the community that we are? How can human, or religious values be expressed and sustained in fresh and significant ways?

5. **CHRISTIAN LIFE:** In depth Bible study - adherence to is the logical action of people who proclaim their Christ-likeness found in being a waste-watcher (?), enriching relationships, sharing our savings with neighbors (local and global) through our mission and service. Does that start in the local church group?
6. **FAMILY LIFE:** The 80's potentially hold more choice in "form" and less judgement on what is Christian. While the historic function and definition of family is changing - how can we affirm that a family can/does consist of people who have contracted to share both the responsibility and the pleasure of life together?



The Gay Academic Union chose to give their annual humanitarian award to the Rev. Bob Arthur in recognition of his work with prisoners and the Cuban Refugees. Rev. Elder John Hose was asked to be present at the awards ceremony to present the award.

PSALM 91

verses 1-6, 14-16

Women: She who lives in the shelter of the Most High,

Men: He who resides in the shadow of the Almighty,

Women: Shall say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress,

Men: My God, in whom I trust."

Women: God will deliver you from the hunter's trap,

Men: Protect you from the deadly poison.

Women: Beneath her wings you will find refuge,

Men: Nestled under the wing tips, His faithfulness is your shield.

Women: You will not fear the terror of the night,

Men: Nor the arrow that flies by day,

Women: Nor an epidemic that spreads in the darkness,

Men: Nor a plague that rages by day.

Women: Because she holds fast to me in love," says God, "I will protect her.

Men: Because he knows my name, I will deliver him.

Women: When she calls me, I will answer her;

Men: I will be with him in trouble.

Women: I will deliver her and honor her.

Men: With a long life I will satisfy him,

Women: And will display to her my salvation."

-- Marcia Geyer

LAY-UPS

by Jean Gralley



OUR new mcc clergy

NEWLY LICENSED MINISTERS -- WHAT ARE THEY UP TO??

By Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson

In August of 1980, the Ministerial Credentials and Affairs Committee approved the licensing of 21 new UFMCC ministers. We thought it would be interesting to see who they are, where they are and what they are doing six months after that event:

Robert "Bob" Angell, age 47, is originally from Massachusetts. He has been a farmer, an antique dealer and a mental health technician. Bob attended Miami Dade Community College. He was the Worship Coordinator of MCC Tallahassee during its very stormy period in 1979-80, when a local minister, Rev. Gerald Sutek led a crusade to oust MCC Tallahassee. (See the June/July issue of IN UNITY, "The Trek").

Bob is presently sojourning in MCC Omaha, but plans to return to Miami soon as the new Worship Coordinator of Emmaus MCC in Miami Beach. Bob says that licensing didn't really change him very much: "I'm still just me when I wake up in the morning. The work isn't any easier or the disappointments either."

Jennie Boyd Bull, age 35, was born and raised in Tennessee. She is a graduate (with high honors) from Swarthmore College, and is presently a third year student at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington DC. Jennie spent some time working for VISTA and the American Friends Service in Harlan County, Kentucky, and, for a time, pursued a career in

journalism as the managing editor of a magazine.

Jennie has been a member of MCC Washington DC for over seven years, but has seen a "clear difference" in her role as a new member of the Washington church's pastoral staff. "It has been wonderful to be able to really claim the authority of ministry in this congregation and to feel encouraged to initiate and to exercise a pastoral role." Jennie reports that the congregation has been very supportive of the change in her role in their midst.

Wesley Theological Seminary has given Jennie an Urban Ministries grant, which enables her to direct the Women's Dinner Program at MCC Washington. Jennie coordinates 35 volunteers in this inner-city, ecumenical effort to feed homeless women. As a part time pastoral staff member, Jennie's other responsibilities also now include the development of a parish extension in Northern Virginia and a women's outreach program.

Judith "Judy" Dahl, age 32, had a wonderful preparation for MCC in a very eclectic religious background: she is a former Benedictine nun and a former Mormon. Judy is originally from Phoenix, Arizona. She was formerly a flight attendant for Frontier Airlines. She is presently a 2nd year student at Iliff School of Theology in Denver, majoring in pastoral care.

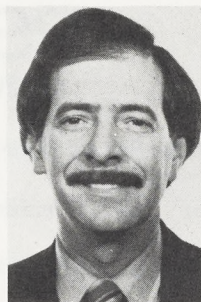
Judy is currently associate pastor of MCC of the Rockies in Denver. She has worked intensely with the Cuban Refugee

Program there, handling a great deal of the counselling. She also is involved in providing creative, innovative worship for MCC of the Rockies.

Judy acknowledges that "there is a real difference in the politics of being on the pastoral staff, rather than being a member or student minister." She says she has learned a lot from the experience of being involved in a multiple staff relationship at the church. Judy feels the congregation has been supportive of her "partly because if I need feedback or strokes or affirmation, I ask for it!"

Harry de Jong, age 28, grew up in Adelaide, Australia. He has attended Moore Theological College and was formerly employed as a sales clerk and a taxi cab driver. Harry was an exhorter in the Melbourne church for several years, and is now serving as the new Interim Pastor of MCC Brisbane. Harry grew up in the

NEW CLERGY continued on page 19



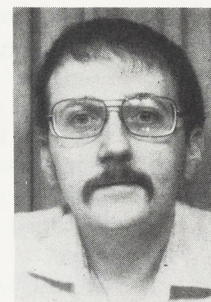
Gerald Motto



Harlan Hasse



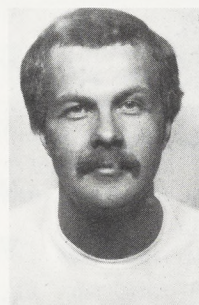
Bob Galloway



Peter Riley



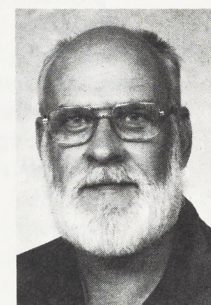
Judy Dahl



Harry de Jong



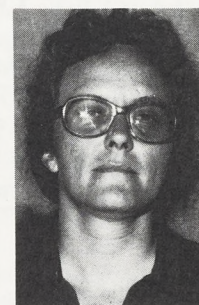
Jennie Boyd Bull



Robert Angell



Jamie McAlister



Lynn Guerra

Baptist Church and Church of Christ, respectively.

I didn't have an opportunity to talk to Harry on the phone, but this is what he has written concerning his view of ministry: "One of the chief duties for any minister is to recognize that they have a great responsibility to develop and encourage the ministering ability of their people, and then allow it to be used so that the Body of Christ can become fully functional once more . . . the ministry is far more than getting in the pulpit on Sunday and then moving over to the altar. Yes, preaching and celebrating the Sacraments are very important, but so are talking and sharing, working and doing, and living and being."

Robert "Bob" Galloway, age 30, grew up in Southern Illinois, in the United Methodist Church. Bob is a graduate of Southern Illinois University from which he has a B.A. in Agriculture and graduate credits in Outdoor Education. He also has a pastoral certificate from the Roman Catholic SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary. Bob is the former Conference Program Staff Manager/ Director of a United Methodist church camp in Southern Michigan.

Since he has been the Worship Coordinator of both MCC Detroit and New Hope MCC in Waterloo, Iowa, licensing did not change very much for Bob in terms of his perceptions of himself and his ministry. However, he reports that it did change others attitudes for him. "Because I'm licensed, I'm perceived as more 'credible' -- probably a sign of our 'clergyitis' in the Fellowship."

Besides being pastor of New Hope MCC, Bob works with the Human Sexuality Task Force of Northern Iowa University, and is interested in the theology and practice of "simplified living."

Myrl "Lynn" Guerra, age 39, is a native of Michigan. She has an Associates Degree and currently attends California State University in Long Beach, CA. Before becoming a UFMCC minister, Lynn was a supervisor at the Packard Company, overseeing the repair of equipment and the budget needs.

Lynn has been a member of MCC Long Beach, CA, for six years. She is currently the administrative assistant pastor at the Long Beach Church. Lynn's main vocational interest is teaching, and she is a new member of the faculty of Samaritan Theological Institute where she teaches public speaking and parliamentary procedure.

Lynn does not feel that becoming a

"Reverend" has changed her. She has tried to share with members of MCC Long Beach that titles should never get in the way of "doing what God is calling us to do."

Harlan "Hal" Hasse, age 45, grew up in a small town in Western Minnesota. He has a B.A. in Science from Moorhead State College, and has attended United Theological Seminary in St. Paul and Samaritan Theological Institute. Hal has taught in the Minneapolis public school system for 18 years, and is a media specialist for their public school libraries.

Becoming licensed was a goal of Hal's for several years, but, sometimes, he says, it still doesn't seem real to him. "I guess I still have a hard time thinking of myself as 'Reverend'." He feels that licensing has positively affected people's relationships with him, as Co-Worship Coordinator of MCC St. Paul. St. Paul, unlike Minneapolis, has almost no social context for gay people, Hal reports. And part of his work with MCC St. Paul is to help that church become a center for development of community.

Gerald "Jerry" Motto, age 42, is originally from New Orleans, Louisiana where he currently pastors the MCC there. Jerry is a graduate of Southeastern Louisiana University and Tulane University, and has also studied at Dallas Theological Seminary, Samaritan Theological Institute and Christian International (where he is still enrolled).

Jerry was an exhorter out of the Dallas church, and a member there for several years. He was formerly employed as a manager of a College store. He grew up in the Roman Catholic and Baptist churches.

Jerry is currently employed part time as a pastor, although he says the job is really full time. His "tentmaking" occupation is that of a substitute school teacher for the New Orleans Public School System. Jerry's current emphases in ministry are the development of a pastoral staff and reaching out into the wider community.

Becoming licensed was a very important and sobering experience for Jerry. He says now that he really feels the "burden" of spiritual responsibility as never before. "It is a lot different having to 'shepherd' rather than being supervised as a student minister," says Jerry.

Jamie McAlister (the former "Sherry James"), age 31, is originally from Idaho and grew up in the Mormon Church. She has a B.S. and M.Ed. from Utah State University. She also did graduate work at Seminex ("Seminary in Exile", an offshoot of the Lutheran Concordia Seminary)

in St. Louis. She has been employed as a librarian and media specialist in the public schools.

Jamie is now the new pastor of MCC Charlotte, North Carolina and is just "thrilled" by the growth and excitement in that congregation. The recent publicity in T.V. Guide didn't hurt, either, she reports. Jamie is helping the Charlotte Gay Community to become organized politically and to establish a hotline.

In actuality, Jamie was really relicensed this year, as she was first licensed for one year as a UFMCC minister in 1977. "It's good to be back," she states; "I was made for this (pastoring an MCC congregation)!"

Peter J. Riley, age 32, is originally from the East coast, but grew up in the State of Washington. Peter was Roman Catholic and had wanted to be a priest as a youth. After becoming an accountant, he moved to Alaska, where he found MCC.

Peter is currently a 3rd year student at Samaritan Theological Institute, and is the newly elected part time pastor of MCC All Saints. He is trying to help the small congregation develop a sense of family, so that it can effectively begin to reach out into the West Hollywood area, where the church is located. "Right now," he says "the location of All Saints MCC is the best kept secret in Hollywood."

Peter says that pastoring is a lot harder than it looks from the "outside." He has had to struggle with discovering his limits. "It's hard not to feel inadequate when dealing with people who have so many difficult problems." Although the responsibilities can feel overwhelming at times for a new pastor, Peter says, "I know I can rely on God's grace to get me through -- it always has." Becoming licensed was the completion of a five year goal for Peter, but, he adds, "It's really just the beginning of a whole new journey."

Amen to that. Stay tuned for the continuation of this look at new ministers in the next issue.

**START PLANNING
FOR THE TENTH GENERAL
CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN
HOUSTON, TEXAS
AT THE SHAMROCK HILTON
AUGUST 3rd through the 9th**

THE CHURCH ALIVE!

words and music by Jack St. John

additional words by David M. Pelletier

moderate

WE ARE THE CHURCH A - LIVE, Christ's pres-ence on this Earth; We
 WE ARE THE CHURCH A - LIVE, Our faith has set us free; No
 WE ARE THE CHURCH A - LIVE, The bod - y must be healed; Where
 WE ARE THE CHURCH A - LIVE, All praise to God on high Cre-

give God's Spir-it bod - y In the act of our new birth. As
 more en - slaved by guilt and shame, We live our lib - er - ty! We
 strife has bruised and bat-tered us, God's whole-ness is re - vealed. Our
 a - tor, Sav-ior, Com - fort-er ! We laud and mag - ni - fy Your

yield- ed, o - pen chan - nels, For God's des-cend - ing Dove, We
 fol- low Christ's ex- amp - le, And free - dom now pro - claim, Des-
 mis - sion is an urg - ent one, In strength and health let's stand, So
 name, Al-migh-ty God of love, Pray give us life that we May

shout and sing, With joy we bring, God's all - in - clus - ive love.
 troy - ing myths of doubt and fear, In Jes - us' might - y name!
 that our wit - ness to God's light will shine ac - ross the land.
 be your Church, The Church A - live, For all e - ter - ni - ty,

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 David Pelletier, U.S.A.

BURNOUT continued from page 7

- f. ulcers
- g. itching - dermatitis
- 18. Suicidal wishes

* *Key and most frequent indicators*

Symptoms of a group of people in burnout profession

1. morale low
2. high job turnover
3. length of time at one position short
4. leave job for another kind of work/
change of professions

CURES

1. Talking to a sympathetic fellow minister, pastor, professional, para-professional or another understanding person.
2. Good physical condition
 - a. exercise
 - b. nutrition -- B vitamins, vitamin C, protein, fresh fruit and vegetables
 - c. relaxation -- naps, meditation
3. Lower level of aspiration to a reasonable height
 - a. acknowledge own limits
 - b. don't take on just one more
 - c. learn to say 'no' without feeling guilty
 - d. be assertive
4. Take regular days off
5. Take vacations -- get away in some physically different place
6. Vary work patterns
 - a. do old things in a new way
 - b. change office around
7. Separate work from rest of life
 - a. don't bring work home
 - b. confine each stress to one part of your life
 - c. make a special place at home for "work" and do it there
8. Improve work setting to eliminate crowding, noise, discomfort
9. Tell yourself about the good things you do
10. Don't dwell on "ain't it awful" either with yourself or others
11. Set up two kinds of goals
 - a. long-term goals of major change
 - b. short-term goals for each day
 - c. do top priority things first
 - d. don't think or say "Oh, what I still have to do"

12. When possible take control of interaction and discussion that affects you and be assertive
13. Allow temporary withdrawals -- vary work
14. Try decompression routine between work and home
 - a. exercise
 - b. walk home
15. Take "your" time at home
16. Take "your" time with friends and enjoy it
17. Sports
18. Hobbies
19. Enjoy where you live and who you live with
20. Clarify your job description and expectations with congregation

SUPPORT SYSTEM

1. Do you need a support system or can you go it alone?
2. What does "support" mean to you? What do you "expect" from a support system?
3. Do you have people who "support" you? Who are they? Are they ministers (inside or outside of UFMCC), lay people, another professional, lover, spouse, parents??
4. What needs do you need support for? Do you go to the same people for the same needs?
5. Was there ever a time, as a minister, that you had no support from anyone? How did it feel? What did you do?
6. Where does God fit into your support system?
7. How did you develop your support system? Was it hard to ask for support? Did it take a long time to develop?
8. Are you part of a support system for another minister?

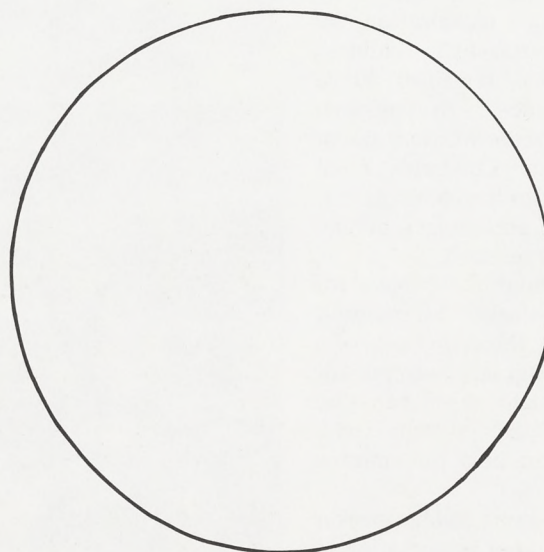
PIE OF LIFE

In an average week how much time is spent

1. sleep
2. school/studying
3. secular work
4. with friends, socializing, playing sports, hobbies, etc.
5. alone, reading for pleasure, relaxing, etc.

6. on chores around your house
7. with family/spouse, including meal time
8. prayer / devotionals / worship / scripture reading
9. doing church work/including studying and preparation
10. miscellaneous/other

Divide up the circle below into approximate sections -- one week is 168 hours.



Spotlight

The Buck Stops Here:
And The Money Starts Flowing

By Dick Follett

Mary Burch is a quiet, unassuming woman in the Ft. Lauderdale Metropolitan Community Church. She does not move quickly on ideas, but when she moves, things happen. This is a story of one woman's mission that has become a cause for her entire District of the Fellowship and, she hopes, will become important for the entire Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches.

About a year ago, Mary became convinced that something should be done about starving children in the world. Since many in our Fellowship do not have children of their own, she felt this could be a special calling for outreach. Yet, she had read, like so many of us have, the horror stories of charity rip-offs, of foolish and wasted giving to charities wherein the executives pocket most of their collections in the form of salaries, expense accounts, travel expenses and so forth. So, she quietly laid aside any action for a better time and season.

God, though, has a way of continually working through big ideas like the one sent to Mary. She contacted The Christian Children's Fund, an organization opened in 1938 as a small orphanage in China. Over the past 42 years, this organization has helped more than a quarter-million children and its leadership has remained stable throughout its existence. Her research showed that 80% or more of every dollar sent to The Christian Children's Fund actually went directly to the children; this was one of the best percentages of any group she found in her research.

After thinking about the project for nearly a full year, she asked her minister for a few moments at the conclusion of a Sunday morning worship service to present her plan. She brought with her that morning three-by-five cards, pencils, and a sincere commitment to help the children who most needed her.

Although not a strong public speaker by her own admission, her presentation (a combination of reading her notes, news-

paper clippings and research findings) was moving for all of us who happened to be in the congregation that morning. For we sensed that this woman's commitment in the name of Christian love was propelling her to speak out in a new way in our Fellowship. It was exciting to share in this venture with her.

She told us that it costs \$15 per month to support one child through The Christian Children's Fund. She knew that some people didn't think they could make that continued commitment over a year's time, so she had been struck with the idea that 90 people giving \$1 per month for a year could support 6 children. She asked each person present to make a commitment that morning on a three-by-five card to give \$12 over the next year for this project.

The response was electric. Many

people pulled out the cash or their checkbooks on the spot. Checks were run through the Ft. Lauderdale church for tax purposes -- a decision made on the spot in response to the needs. In her report to the Southeast District Conference, Mary Burch stated that she had collected \$1,092 in two months from 91 people in the Ft. Lauderdale area and that she had forwarded that money to The Christian Children's Fund. In addition, five individuals were so enthused that they, too, decided to support a single child by themselves. As of this writing, eleven children are receiving support from this single presentation one Sunday morning in August in Ft. Lauderdale.

Mary Burch is not looking for personal fame. Indeed, when I approached her about writing this story for IN UNITY she was surprised that someone felt her work deserved such publicity. But it certainly does. There are valuable lessons for all of us in Christ's work in what she did and in how she did it.

First, she did not rush the Spirit, nor did she ignore the Spirit's promptings. While she did not feel ready to act when she first received the idea, she did begin her



Mary Burch (Photo by Bob Ewart)

quiet and thorough research. She waited upon God for the correct timing, both for herself and for her congregation.

Notice also, please, that Mary did not do what many of us have so often done: she did not sit back and criticize the pastor and the board of directors for not having already taken action on a project she felt was important. Further, she did not simply take the project to them for them to handle. On the contrary, as a board member herself, she knew the amount of work MCC boards and pastors are doing already. No, she simply gathered her evidence, prepared her presentation, asked for a few moments, and presented her ideas to her sisters and brothers in Christ. The procedure was kept as simple as possible within the church family.

It seems that this is exemplary of the work Jesus would have us do continually in our Fellowship. If we seriously believe in the priesthood of all believers, something very important to so many of us in our Fellowship, the Mary Burch story should become more and more common in all of our churches. If we believe that each member is called to our special ministries, we must get about the business of taking on our own share of responsibilities. Passing the buck to the board or passing the buck to the pastor may be necessary at times, but how much can we simply do on our own? And, how much more effective is such an appeal when it comes from the obvious and genuine concern of our laity -- of people just like us? Of people who have no "official" role to fulfill, save that of "Christian"?

When Mary presented her story to the Southeast District Conference Business Meeting, she did not ask for funds on the spot. Instead, she encouraged other congregations to follow a similar procedure and to send the donations from their churches directly. A central hierarchy administering what we have called in the Southeast District "The Mary Burch Project" is the last thing we need in our Fellowship. No, Mary Burch encourages each individual congregation to spread the joy of giving -- the very real method of helping starving children -- in its own way. What works here may not work in your congregation as well, but Mary is certain that when people are presented with this obvious need and are given a simple and very inexpensive way to deal with it, the response will be positive and rapid.

This is lay action at its very best: immediate, direct and responsive to real human needs -- without fanfare or excessive organization. This project is certainly

not anti-organization, but it shows clearly that the single, committed Christian can, through careful obedience to the Spirit's promptings, generate positive responses. When the buck stopped, the money started flowing.

If you wish to join in the Mary Burch Project in your congregation, in your

Ronald McDonald, comes out, gets fired

Bob Brandon, an openly gay actor who once played Ronald McDonald in TV commercials, was ordered by a Florida district court to never again wear Ronald McDonald "drag" or to say or imply that Ronald McDonald is gay. The order was a result of the McDonald corporation's lawsuit charging that Brandon's coming out would lead to the public's belief that their trademark was gay.

Brandon said that he came out to show that gay people can and do interact with children without "perverting their morals."

(Reprinted from Newsletter of INTEGRITY/Houston, October 1980.)

office, or wherever, simply share this good news with your friends and mail your checks to The Christian Children's Fund, Box 26511, Richmond, VA 23261. You will know what you have done. The child you support will know. Christ will know. No further reward is necessary.

ELDERS' MINUTES

are now available through
Subscription

In accordance with a resolution passed at General Conference, the minutes of Elders' meetings will now be provided to individuals or churches by the Fellowship Offices at a yearly subscription rate of \$7.50 (\$4.00 for any single set). We will bill only churches; individuals are requested to please remit a check or money order made out to UFMCC with their subscription order.

To begin this year's series of minutes (October '79 to October '80), please send your name, address, and check or money order to:

MINUTES/UFMCC Clerk
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We realize our three-fold purpose: to inform, to interpret and to entertain.

All staff members and contributing writers will be governed by ethical canons including responsibility, freedom of the press, sincerity, truthfulness, accuracy, impartiality, fair play and equality.

In Unity will strive not to be sexist, racist or ageist in its content.

Editorials by the editor or the Publishers will reflect responsible views, backed by research and fact. Contributed articles will express the opinions of the specific writer and, therefore, do not constitute endorsement by In Unity.

Articles on Fellowship news, news about the gay community at large, feedback to the magazine and articles relevant to the spiritual, intellectual and community life of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches are encouraged.

It is the goal of In Unity to be an open forum for opinions expressed by all persons within our Church.

All articles must be written in inclusive language or they will be edited to follow the guidelines of inclusive language as established by the General Conference.

All articles, letters, etc. must be signed or they will not be published. The editor has the right to edit all letters in regard to libel laws. Length of letters will be determined by space provisions.

The editor has the right to refuse to publish any article submitted for publication. Decisions will be based on readability, relevancy and editorial policy.

fellowship family



OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

for this part of the Church Year which focuses on the story of Jesus.

For September through November, 1980, MCC East Bay geared its Christian Education program toward Lay Ministry Skills: helping members discover and develop their lay ministry through personal and group skills in group dynamics and listening and responding. These classes were led by Jodi Safier, Pastoral Assistant, and they were so powerful and meaningful to many of the participants that they have decided to form an ongoing group called S.W.I.M. (the Safe Walk Is Maranatha). The acronym of SWIM was decided upon when one of the members said that he rejoices that he is now swimming again and not just treading water. SWIM'ers meet once a week to share, disclose, listen and support. New members are encouraged through offering SWIM workshops which teach basic skills in listening and responding. The instructor/facilitator Jodi Safier is arranging through the extension program of Samaritan Theological Institute to offer this program in other congregations and areas.

MCC East Bay's present Christian Education program includes a weekly Bible Study of the Gospel according to Luke, led by Pastor Jeff Pulling. Starting in Advent and going through Pentecost, this Bible Study takes Luke's Gospel from beginning to end so that participants can follow one account of Jesus from pre-birth to ascension

DISTRICT CONFERENCES

By Rev. Bob Darst
District Coordinator
Mid-Central District

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

District Conference in Kansas City was wonderful. There were 230 people registered and they were from every one of the churches in the District. The Sunday afternoon worship service in the sanctuary at St. Paul's was attended by a record-breaking 328 persons. All of the volunteers in MCC of Greater Kansas City are to be heartily congratulated for the superb job they did in hosting the Conference.

We are very excited here in Omaha because we have been approached by the Rev. Ben S. (I'm not at liberty to reveal his last name at this moment because he is still serving a Methodist church in Lincoln), that a small group of our community wish to start an MCC Study Group in Lincoln. Either Donna Vinson or myself will be meeting with them in a few weeks. It has long been one of our dreams to get a group going in Lincoln.

WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

MCC Worcester celebrated its 6th anniversary in October (together with the Mailbox), while the UFMCC celebrated its 12th anniversary as a denomination.

MCC Worcester hosted its first District Conference in October and welcomed brothers and sisters from all over New England and New York.

WATERLOO/CEDAR FALLS, IOWA

Church of New Hope held a dedication service on November 2 at 7:00 p.m. The service was the first service in our new place at 712 Jefferson, Waterloo. Rev. Bob Darst, the Mid-Central District Coordinator for UFMCC conducted the service and brought the message.

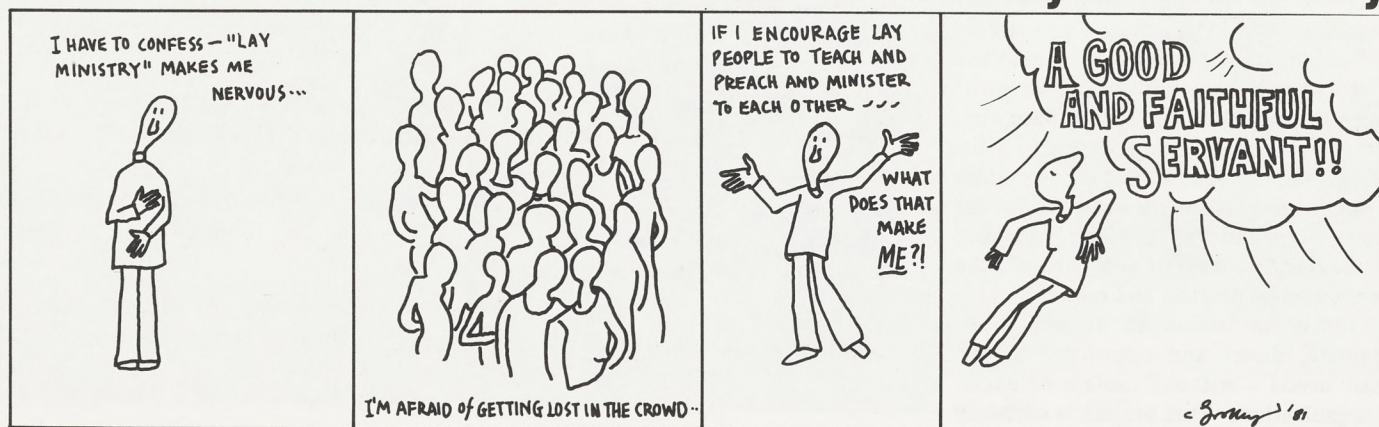
Church of New Hope recently celebrated their three year anniversary. They held a potluck supper and a worship celebration to remember the event on November 16. Church of New Hope has seen lots of change in three years, and they celebrated those changes.

The first Sunday of every month persons are encouraged to bring food items

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LAY-UPS

by Jean Gralley



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to church. These food items are collected and taken to the Senior Activity Center for distribution.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Metropolitan Community Church of San Francisco recently offered six classes through its Department of Christian Education. The classes were open to anyone interested. Running for six successive Wednesday evenings, these classes were: SAINTS AND SINNERS: A Survey of Christian Church History, CHRISTIAN DOUBT: A Workshop on Creative Christian Thinking, THE SECRET OF STAYING IN LOVE: A Study of the Book by John Powell, S.J., BIBLE STUDY LEADERS TRAINING, FLOWER ARRANGING: By Charles West of "Paradise Found," END.

AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

We began the month in a strong position, with outreach into all parts of the greater Auckland community. Rev. Renee Hein of Adelaide, Australia, arrived in August to begin service as Interim Assistant Pastor of our congregation. Her presence has been a tremendous boost to our already thriving ministry, and an inspiration for even greater efforts. During August we also sponsored a special fund raising effort by our Christian Social Action to aid the refugees from Cuba and to help purchase a van to extend the UFMCC ministries in Nigeria. As of September, we have surpassed our goals and will be able to add \$73.03 to help in this mighty effort. We were pleased that four new members were added to our rolls this month, which swells our membership to 37. Our pre-set goal by 1 October was 45, but this will take efforts by all of us, and close thought and prayer if you have not already taken membership for yourself.

We laughed a lot during August, too!!! Christmas in August was a most memorable evening, with Santa Claus listening to all the wishes of all the good little folk at the party. And what singing! Who says MCC doesn't sing? And then there was the University Dance which MCC staffed. We together showed we knew how to work and pull off an event and turn it into a tremendous success. All those MCC Crosses glittering in the lights made quite a witness

to God working in our lives.

August brought us many services of worship, not the least of which was a Retreat held mid-month on a Saturday. We talked, shared, prayed and came to know each other much better and learned from each other.

COLUMBUS, OHIO

The Great Lakes District Fall Conference was very successfully hosted by the Columbus MCC (OHIO) the weekend of November 7-9. More than 2/3 of the congregation was actively involved in the conference, which was hailed as one of the best ever by those attending. A lively variety entertainment was produced by the laity for the enjoyment of conference guests on Saturday night and other members of the District produced and coordinated workshops and several worship services, to make this a truly great District Conference.

On the same weekend, Sunday, November 9, the official Chartering Service was held in the United Christian Center, the new worship facility shared by MCC Columbus. Rev. Elder Charlie Arehart brought the message and the charter was presented by District Coordinator Val Bouchard. Rev. Rob Shivers was installed as full pastor in the same service which received congratulations from Senator John Glenn, Gov. James Rhodes and several ministers of local congregations. A new attendance record was set and guest ministers of other denominations spoke warmly of the celebration services.

Only a month earlier the congregation had learned that their worship center for the past two years had been sold and they did not know where they would be worshipping until only two weeks prior to the deadline, three weeks prior to the District Conference and Charter Service. A Building Fund to purchase their own space has consequently gotten off to a rousing start and they have located a building they would like to purchase for only \$60,000 in a good neighborhood if they can raise the funds in time.

ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA

In the past two months the Adelaide Church has grown a lot, not numerically, but spiritually within the individuals attending the Church. This has been

reflected in the growth of financial support as well as personal commitment of the individuals within the Church.

Three new members have been admitted into Church membership. The prospect for more new members is good as we are getting a lot of new people starting to attend.

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

One noteworthy bit of information is that the Victorian Government plans to bring the State's sexual practices laws before the Spring session of parliament for revision. Several members of the congregation have been active in canvassing local Members of Parliament and the State Attorney General with the hope that justice will be done.

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

We at MCC of the Monterey Peninsula wish to bring all of you greetings and to let you know that our work and ministry is growing in our area.

Rev. Stan Harris and Rev. David Kromer arrived from New Zealand on the 28th of October to serve as co-worship coordinators of our group. Since that time many new and wonderful things have been happening!

Please note that our place of worship has been changed to much larger and more attractive facilities at The Seaside Community Center. Our Wednesday night service is now held at The Rectory.

Both David and Stan were fortunate in securing excellent employment, so it would indeed seem that God is blessing our continued work and ministry.

If you have contacts or friends in our area, please give them the word about our new contacts, ministry, places and times of worship, etc. In addition, if there is any way that we may be of service for you, please let us know.

Please come by and visit us in our beautiful city!

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

MCKC IS COMING OF AGE!! In 1983 we will be 10 years old. Already a strong church, we now need to examine our areas of strength and weakness and

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make plans for the future. To do this, a new program -- WE CAN DO IT TOGETHER -- GOALS FOR '83 -- is announced. This is a brief outline of the Program. We invite you to read it carefully, pray about it and share in its development.

1. We shall set the tenth anniversary of MCCKC as the end-point for planning. This means a period of 30 months is ahead of us.

2. On Tuesday, November 11, there was an open meeting of the Board of Directors from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Our ministry team and members of the congregation attended. At this initial meeting, the Long Term Goals defined by the Staff at its recent Planning Session were discussed, adjusted and adopted.

3. On Saturday, November 22, all Board Members, Deacons, Exhorters, Deacon Candidates and Exhorter Candidates -- plus all interested persons in the congregation (not just members) participated in a 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. "Can Do" Session. Each person selected that Goal area which most challenged him/her. Temporary Conveners will have been named for each of these eight Goal areas. In this six-hour "Can Do" Session, the Long Term Goals as adopted on November 11 were discussed in depth. Each was defined in more detail with proper calendaring of both the ultimate goal and the intermediate goals.

4. The eight Goal Groups selected permanent leaders who will serve for the 30 month period. Preferably, these leaders will be individuals who are not at present heavily involved in providing leadership to important current areas of church responsibility. To be successful, this program must involve a large portion of the church family with responsibilities shared widely.

5. Every six months, there shall be an extended "Can Do" Session in which each Goal Group shall report to the entire body the progress they have made, together with any modifications in the overall plan which are felt necessary.

GOALS FOR '83

BUILDING NEEDS -- 1. Heat & cool upstairs and basement 2. Acquire adjacent property 3. Kitchen 4. Lounge 5. Offices 6. Carpeting & completion of sanctuary.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT -- 1. Management Training 2. Broader involvement of congregation 3. Conflict management 4. Recordkeeping and manuals. **OUTREACH** -- 1. Gay &

surrounding community 2. Public interpretation 3. Youth 4. Older gays 5. Feminist community 6. Racial minorities 7. Establishing new MCCs. **PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT** (human services) -- 1. Deacons 2. Peer counseling 3. Pastoral counseling 4. Gay talk 5. Deacon's Closet 6. Growth & intimacy groups. **PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT** (learning) -- 1. Academy 2. Interest groups 3. The arts 4. Library 5. Sunday school & Children's Program. **SPIRITUAL** -- 1. Retreats 2. Workshops, speakers, etc. 3. Prayer 4. Bible study 5. Dialoging. **FUTURE STAFF NEEDS** -- 1. Administrative Assistant 2. Full-time Assistant Pastor 3. Part-time Associate Pastor 4. Custodian. **LONG RANGE FINANCIAL PLANS** -- 1. Stewardship 2. Wills & Bequests 3. Fund raising.

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

We recently held a 'retreat' at Geringong on the N.S.W. South Coast. Those who attended received many spiritual and friendship benefits, including a sense of warmth between men and women.

On the social scene we have just held our first regular monthly dance for a number of years and we are planning to hold them at monthly intervals. In addition, we have a number of theatre parties to productions of the Gay Theatre Company.

At a recent service 11 people became members of our Church. One of our members has recently become Coordinator of the N.S.W. Council of Gay Groups; and a number of people from MCC took part in the various sessions and workshops of the Sixth National Conference of Lesbians and Homosexual Men held in Sydney. One of the workshops conducted was on Christianity and Gays.

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

MCC of Nashville dedicated its new Church building November 16th in a service attended by 105 persons. During the week following there were programs of discussion of the Church's past and its future and of how the Church can best cooperate with other groups in the community.

The New Freedom Evangelistic Team added to the dedication celebrations, conducting the first mid-week worship in the new building on Wednesday, and leading services of spiritual renewal on

Thursday and Saturday. The Team's service on Sunday was the culmination of the week.

The building includes a fully equipped caterer's kitchen as well as space for assemblies, small group meetings, and offices. A new organ was donated to complete the purchase of new furnishings for the Church. The building is conveniently located in respect to bus lines and Interstate highways, near the heart of downtown Nashville. Ample parking space has been provided by the permission of Jim Reed Chevrolet Co.

As the congregation, board, and ministerial staff plan use of the new space, consideration is being given to a women's night for the community, weekly dinners, special social events, Christian education and nurture workshops, Alcoholics Anonymous, and rap-support groups.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

It was two days before Christmas, and the Downtown Cluster of Congregations in Washington, D.C. was in an uproar! Due to a communications mishap, no turkeys or hams could be ordered for the annual Christmas Dinner for street people, and it had been canceled. The Rev. Jennie Boyd Bull, Minister of Outreach for MCC DC, and Rev. William Moremen, pastor of First Congregational United Church of Christ, where the dinner has been served for three years, were valiantly trying to make the best of a sad situation by arranging transportation to other locations for dinner. Then the Christmas miracle came upon us -- it always does, you know!

MCC DC pastor, The Rev. Larry Uhrig, was having lunch at the D.C. Eagle, a Levi-Western bar near the church, and told one of its owners, Barbara Bruce, of the problem. She immediately responded by making arrangements to order quantities of turkeys, hams, and pies to feed 300 people. And Christmas Dinner was on! She even supplied a poinsettia plant for the Christmas Midnight Service.

So, in Washington, D.C., on Christmas 1980, a gay bar proclaimed the Gospel through feeding the hungry. And 50 homeless women received mittens, scarves and hats as Christmas gifts from members of the congregation. And there was candlelight, cookies, hot cider and much joy, as more than a dozen MCC members and friends served dinner and rejoiced at the miracle of Christmas.

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FAMILY continued from page 26

On an ongoing basis, for nine months now MCC DC has been serving dinner to homeless women in the downtown Washington area. In coordination with First Congregational United Church of Christ, its host congregation, about 30 volunteers meet five nights a week to cook, serve, talk, clean up and befriend the women who come to find warmth, food and a listening ear. Many of the women stay in a nearby emergency shelter run by Carmelite Sisters of Charity, who work closely in coordination with MCC, sharing Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners.

MCC people have grown much in learning to understand the fears and loneliness of homelessness. On December 6, MCC DC sponsored a workshop on the topic for the Washington community, presenting a panel of people working in the various shelters in the city that serve the homeless women. The Rev. Delores Berry of MCC Baltimore led a portion of the workshop, helping participants identify with mentally ill people, their own fears, and the economic and social conditions creating homelessness. As gay people, workshop participants recognized the ways many gay people are often on the edge of homelessness.

As MCC DC considers purchasing its own church home, its experience in serving the homeless underscores the need for a stable, rooted space in which community can grow. And the homeless people who come to us, and who increasingly participate in worship with us, are teaching us much about faith, strength, and living at home with God.

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

Deacons of MCC Hartford have begun a "Church Within A Church," which gives individuals (members and non-members) an opportunity to share in a new kind of worship experience. Although the experience is fairly new, all indications point to a very successful worship experience. What is a House Church? It's many things. First, and most importantly, it's a trust/sharing experience for strangers or acquaintances who soon become family. The accent is on trust building and for that reason each House Church group is limited to 12 people. However, in order to be effective it is also necessary to have at least five participants. Meetings are held in individual participants' homes.

Individuals who wish to participate are required to make a number of commit-

ments. They are asked to participate on a regular basis, and if they are unable to do so, are urged not to participate. The reason for this is that it takes time to be able to trust one another enough to "open up" to inner feelings. They are also required to "do something for someone else" within the group during the interval between formal meetings. Often House Church experiences are shared during regular MCC Services.

At the first House Church meeting, the participants were requested to do three things: (1) To sit in a circle in the host living room. (2) Not to speak. (3) To take off their shoes and socks. Once everyone had settled down, two Hartford deacons washed (massaged) and dried the feet of each person and each other. Then they asked everyone how it felt to have their feet washed. The response was varied but positive.

The next part of the experience centered on "who we are." It included talking about selves, religious backgrounds and anything else people wanted to share about themselves. It provided an opportunity to get to know one another. Surprisingly, once participants found that the leaders were open and honest, they began to be.

Part three of the service gave participants the opportunity to answer four questions: (1) How do you see yourself? (2) Where would you like to be? (3) What's stopping you? (4) What do you need to get there? Once again the group opened up, this time to negative aspects about themselves. And the important "truat" began. People began stammering, their responses trailing off. They were sharing things that they had never shared before. They were telling others that they needed to be loved . . . they needed a family. Eyes began to fill with tears. The participants were beginning to see that they had a family.

Shared concerns were experienced in a new way. Each person wrote his or her name and concern on a piece of paper and placed it in a basket. Then, the basket was passed again and each person took a name from it. They were requested to pray for the person whose name they had drawn and to do something for that person. It could be a phone call, an invitation to dinner, a movie or any other pleasant outreach.

The offering was another new "giving" experience. Everyone was asked to bring an offering gift of a specific food item. One person brought apples, another sliced celery and carrots, another mushrooms,

etc. The deacon leaders had written "thanks messages" for each one, such as: "Bob brought tomatoes. We asked him to bring them because sometimes people take tomatoes for granted, especially when they're plentiful. But in the winter they become very special because they're scarce. That's how we see Bob. At times people take advantage of him, but at other times, particularly after he's been away for awhile, he becomes very special." The only request for the agape was that someone feed someone else, again affording the opportunity to share, satisfy and touch.

As individuals were ready to leave, they were asked to stand, while everyone formed a ring around them, hugging and affirming them. Everyone was assured that they were a family. They could turn to one another when they needed to and they could trust others.

The common thread that seemed to weave in and out of the fabric of each person was that they needed to be loved, and that they had a lot of love to give someone else. They also admitted to bring frightened of others and were afraid to reach out. But they were reminded that "They must remember that everyone feels the same way. They must be able to reach out to others who are also afraid, yet need love."

The future of the House Church lies in participants being able to build trust relationships with others within the group, and then to the larger MCC community. It can be frightening . . . trust takes time. But the end results can be very rewarding.

It is extremely important for the group leaders to have patience. Trust building takes more time for some people than for others. It's also important that they allow people to "open up" at their own pace. Trying to push people to trust others can result in losing people who need the group the most.

Facilitating the House Church are John Crowley and Sue Hartshorn.

POMONA, CALIFORNIA

MCC Pomona Valley has been experiencing visits from the Old Testament Prophets, "in person" for the last few months. First, Ezekiel introduced us to the prophetic life by telling his vision of the Valley of Dry Bones, (Ezekiel 38) complete with God speaking to him, wind, rattling bones and a couple of current prophecies (one which has already come true!).

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fellowship family

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Then Jonah, the favorite of Jeroboam II, made quite an entrance, providing us with dancing "slaves," storms, wind, thunder, lightning, a whale (including a few minutes in the belly!), a trip through Nineveh, a miraculous vine and gourd and a lot of insight into what it's like to run from a God who speaks out loud.

Our next visit was from Elijah and Elisha, with a fiery chariot. Why not? We've had a whale!

All of this is worked on each month by different and various members of our congregation. Comments, results and education about the Bible have all been very positive.

TORONTO, ONTARIO

COMING HOME:

The Challenge and the Excitement

It has been a very exciting past few weeks for MCC Toronto. We began a six week project which presented a huge challenge for our congregation. The decision was made to relocate all of our programs into one location, but in order to do so, we had to totally renovate the facility and we had to raise \$30,000 to finance those renovations. All in six weeks.

Our new home was to be the south wing of Bathurst Street United Church. For more than a decade this space had been used by numerous theatre groups, each one making changes to meet their needs. Over the years the beautiful lead glass windows had been painted black, some of the oak woodwork had been painted, the wiring was in disarray, the walls and ceiling were in need of repair and painting, the balcony needed to be reinforced, the floor needed to be restored, the sanctuary lighting needed to be redone . . . and the list went on and on. In addition to all the repairs, we needed to buy chairs, a piano, an organ, carpet, etcetera, etcetera.

Immediately, committees were formed and the task begun. Many times, it looked as if it would be impossible to get the materials on time, but as every problem arose, along came a solution. Our fund-raising campaign was to conclude on 30th November. As of that date, we had hoped

to have raised the \$30,000. During the first five weeks we raised \$18,400 so on that final Sunday, one week before our opening service, we needed \$11,600. One hundred and seven people were in attendance and we were all a bit nervous. The regular offering was received, and then the special offering. At the end of the service, we were informed that the special offering was \$12,187.69 with \$2,440.00 in pledges, therefore totalling \$14,627.69.

On 7th December we celebrated our first service in our new home. The work was completed. The funds had been raised. What a celebration we had! Two hundred and forty-seven people packed the sanctuary. Twenty people from our new host church, Bathurst Street United Church, read the following greeting:

BSUC: Who knocks on our door?

MCC: We represent the Metropolitan Community Church in Toronto.

BSUC: Enter our doors and enter our lives. Blessed are you who come in the name of the Lord.

MCC: Who are you that open these doors to us?

BSUC: We are the heirs and the

trustees of the women and men who dedicated this building in 1910 and who have kept its doors open to this city and this world for seventy years.

MCC: Why do you trust us in your house?

BSUC: Because it was built for learning, for loving, for growing, for grace and for truth. We have found you to be seekers and sharers and celebrators with us of these gifts of the Holy Spirit. Therefore we trust you with the keys of this house. We wish you welcome. May it become your home and action-base as a congregation. God give you joy. God give you courage. We have been accepted; we accept you. For God has called us all into one body . . . male and female . . . bond or free . . . all one in the Christ and in the partnership of ministry. Enter, and lead this company in worship.

It was a very spirit-filled service. One woman said it was the first time she had seen light come in the windows in twelve years. The symbolism was dramatic.

FAMILY continued on page 29



BEFORE: MCC Toronto had their job cut out for them with their new building.

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Our challenge now is to use this new tool that God has given to us as a means of more effectively reaching out to the people of Toronto. There are many hurting and lonely people out there. We need to welcome them home. God has really blessed us and we need to share our blessings with others.

We hope that you will be challenged by our story to dream dreams and to work at making your dreams become reality.

WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

The Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Community Church of Worcester has challenged the Worcester County Ecumenical Council to pass a resolution which calls for the affirmation of full civil rights for ALL citizens of Worcester County including those who are homosexual in their orientation. At the same time, the church again submitted its application for full membership in the Council.

The Rev. Johannes W. Di Maria-Kuiper, pastor of MCC Worcester, stated that the Board of Directors felt that, according to the teachings of Christ, the Christianity of the Council had to be challenged as long as men and women continue to live in fear of losing their right to work and housing, since they are not protected by the laws of the communities in which they live.

The Board also explained that the church was applying for membership at this early time, knowing full well that the application cannot be voted on until the Pentecost Assembly in 1981: "It is our sincere intent to use this time before such Assembly to assist the Council and its members to become fully acquainted with the ecumenical ministry of our church. We will be preparing study papers for distribution to the Council's membership, and extend invitations to clergy and laity alike to participate in seminars, forum discussions and presentations throughout the winter season."

The Board has pledged to make the work and ministry of MCC Worcester more visible in the community. "The Good News of a God who loves ALL people is not a passive task," Kuiper stated, "Love is action and our church will take that action where Christ took that message: to all corners of the community."

Presently, MCC Worcester, in addition to its regular worship on Sunday and Wednesday evenings, provides a Drop-In



AFTER: This remodelling job shows the love and dedication of the MCC Toronto congregation.

Center, Bible Study, Prayer Group, Rap group and participates in a weekly radio Series, and the Joyful Noise Choir. The program on WCUW, "Straight Talk About church is also facilitating a Parents of Gays Gays."

Advertisement

INTERESTED IN GRADUATE DEGREE?

Do you want a B.A. or M.A. in Gay Studies or Psychology or some other area of study?

I will send you information about a reputable college with state approved programs.

You may stay where you are, continue your present job while earning your degree, get credit for life experience.

Government grants (BEOG) and various student loans (NDSL, GSL, FISL) available for eligible applicants.

Write:

Rev. Richard R. Mickley, M.A.
Box 2645
Los Angeles, CA 90051

Danger Signals

By Galen M. Moon

This "New Image" of gays which has suddenly become the focus of attention, is it real, is it solid, or is it exploitation by hungry merchants?

Big advertisers in both printed and visual media have suddenly (?) begun emphasizing gay people, gay lifestyles situations, gay entertainers, gay authors, and gay professionals in ways which, on the surface, appear to be complete acceptance of gay people as equal members of the human family. Are they really saying that, or are they just cleverly enticing gay women and men to buy whatever it is they are selling, merchandise or politics?

Can we quit hedging on our choice of words in conversations? Can we take our lovers to the company parties, the church socials, or the teachers' meetings? Can we nail shut those closet doors and just be who we are from now on? Nay, nay, brothers and sisters, not if we want to keep our jobs as teachers, preachers, civil service workers, politicians, doctors, nurses, police-people, judges, football players, or what have you.

The fact is that the advertising and sales promotion people, awakened to the reality of more than 20 million gay people earning pay checks and having money to spend, have devised very subtle -- sometimes subliminal -- appeals to our recognition. Appeals which do not register with the other millions of viewers, and in most instances do not offend the so-called "straight" people. Who among them would believe that the sexy football player who endorses certain toiletries was selected because the promoters deliberately aimed their campaign toward the wallets of gay men? Who among them believes when they hear/see the words "gay," "homosexual," or "lesbian" on the air or in print that editors who for years banned such words were forced to relax their guidelines because they faced loss of big revenue advertising and not because people have learned to accept us as legitimate members of the human family?

Homophobia is still rampant in this land. The next door neighbor, the woman who delivers the mail, the doctor in the emergency room, the preacher in the pulpit, the service station operator, the police judge who sets your fine, your

employer -- even the one who publicly states she/he does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation -- will condemn you, refuse to serve you, harass and denounce you, and do whatever is possible to make your life miserable if there is even a suspicion that you are one of "those people."

Are the gay spokespeople who talk and write about our "new image," our enlarging freedoms, our advancement from second to first class citizenry sure of what they are talking about? Or, have they been hoodwinked by surface appearances? Have they tested these "new freedoms?" Have they filled out employment applications with answers which clearly indicate their homosexuality? Have they tried dancing with their lovers at the country club ball?

This "New Image" bit may well be a mirage effect of the elaborate con-game the merchandisers are playing. It should be carefully evaluated and the results verified before we naively wander along the path to new areas of emotional stress and unnecessary torture.

Actually, the only certainty of our having attained the "New Image" status will be the time when the "image" label has faded completely away; when we are not recognized as different or designated as a special minority -- when we are just part of the family.

That day when we can fulfill our lives without the presently existing strictures and society induced guilt trips MAY NOT/HAS NOT arrived. It is only the bombardment of gay oriented sales pressures which mislead both homosexuals and heterosexuals.

We gay people must continue educating our own, our families, our friends, our co-workers, our communities, and our nation to that time and place where the term "gay" is no more denigrating than such descriptions as "blond," "brown-eyed," "handsome," or "petite." We need to develop honest approaches and honest portrayals and overcome what we now consider as a real need to live two-faced lives. We need to support each other openly and whole-heartedly. We need to understand that WE ARE and the only way to deal with that fact is to live as fully and graciously as we are able. We must exercise judgement and caution in our responses to the allurements of manipulators and ego-trippers.

We must not be lulled into a false sense of security by shallow thinking gay opportunists who proclaim a new era, a new age of humanity, victory over bigotry and ignorance. We must be realistic, not dreamers! We must be "... wise as serpents ..." (Matt. 10:16) and make sure we are not being enticed into more tortures.

DISCRIMINATION

On Convention Accommodations

Sense-of-the-House Motion No. 1

Background

In July of this year, Holiday Inn International, over the protests of the local innkeeper, forced the Metropolitan Community Church of Ft. Myers, Florida to stop renting its facilities for religious meetings. In August, Holiday Inn International attempted a last minute cancellation of accommodations for the 5th Annual Southeastern Conference of Lesbians and Gay Men in Memphis, Tennessee. Only a threatened lawsuit prevented the cancellation, but harassment was extensive. Recently, a machine gun attack occurred in Greenwich Village. Sadly, homophobia is alive, well and increasing.

In 1976, the National Council of Teachers of English established its Committee on (Concerns of) Lesbians and Gay Males in the English Profession. Since that time, NCTE has moved to eliminate discrimination against lesbians and gay males. Further, NCTE has a consistent history of political support for minority and women's rights. In the name of human rights and dignity, the following sense-of-the-house motion is presented:

Sense-of-the-House Motion

RESOLVED, that NCTE shall not negotiate further contracts with Holiday Inn International without an express guarantee of non-discrimination against lesbians and gay males as a consistent policy.

RESOLVED, that NCTE encourages similar actions by its affiliates.

RESOLVED, that NCTE officially notify Holiday Inn International of this motion.



On Banning Discrimination Against Lesbians and Gay Males

Sense-of-the-House Motion No. 2

Background

In 1975, the National Council of Teachers of English established a Lesbian and Gay Male Caucus. In 1976, NCTE established the Committee on (Concerns of) Lesbians and Gay Males in the English Profession. Further, in that year NCTE passed a resolution opposing discrimination against lesbians and gay males, "wherever it exists." The work of the Committee over the past four years shows clearly that such discrimination has not ended. On the contrary, there are increasing signs of growing harassment and severe physical threats, including actual murders, of lesbians and gay men in the United States (witness the machine gun murders in Greenwich Village this week).

The NCTE has consistently encouraged support for federal and state legislation on moral issues, such as the ERA, statehood for Washington, DC, and numerous other projects. On the basis of this wide support for human rights, on the basis of the 1976 resolution of lesbian and gay male support (a resolution which passed by a nearly unanimous vote in 1978 at the CCCC Convention (Conference on College Composition and Communication), and on the basis that the National Education Association, the Ohio Education Association, New York City and Washington, DC teachers' associations and numerous other state and municipal teachers' organizations have passed similar resolutions, the

following sense-of-the-house motion is presented:

Sense-of-the-House Motion

RESOLVED, that the National Council of Teachers of English encourages passage of legislation banning discrimination against lesbians and gay males.

THE ISSUE

On July 22, the House of Representatives passed an anti-gay amendment to the Legal Services Corporation appropriation bill on a motion by Larry McDonald (D-GA). The amendment reads:

"That no part of this appropriation shall be used by the Legal Services Corporation to provide legal assistance in promoting, defending or protecting homosexuality."

Explaining this amendment, McDonald said, "... it is my feeling that the Congress of the United States should not spend a penny of the taxpayers dollar to support, defend, protect or legitimize the practice or acts of homosexuality... Individuals in their personal lives may be at times solely a matter of their own concern. This is not to say, however, that the Congress... should venerate certain conduct by spending money to defend wholly unacceptable behavior."

John Burton (D-CA) and S. William Green (R-NY) spoke against the amendment stating that gay people pay as much taxes as anyone and do not receive a waiver from taxes due to their sexual orientation (Burton) and that to discriminate against any class of citizens is contrary to the spirit of a bill designed to provide legal services for those Americans who cannot afford them (Green).

On voice vote the amendment was defeated, but McDonald called for a recorded vote. The outcome was reversed with 290 voting in favor of the amendment and 113 against. 30 members did not vote.

Letters

LETTER FROM AN AREA
REPRESENTATIVE TO OIM

... The results of the questionnaire which I sent to the ministers and Area Reps of the District was appalling to say the least. Of over 40 questionnaires mailed, I only received five back, all of them from Area Reps. In my "official" capacity, I want to offer the following statement for the record: "I'm real disappointed that MCC, at least from my experience, is taking such a lethargic view toward prison ministry. It seems curiously strange to me that our Fellowship finds it much more challenging to liberate our Cuban brothers and sisters with such unusual fervor, and yet this Fellowship will not create the same energy for those brothers and sisters suffering in institutions of all kinds across America. I think the Area Reps and their teams do a fantastic job. I think our Director also does a great job. I am also supportive of the Cuban Refugee Project. But I also seriously challenge MCC to deal with thousands of American refugees living in this country."

Michael Graham
Portland, Oregon

Dear Staff:

Greetings in the One whose name is under debate!

I read your magazine from cover-to-cover. But today I was annoyed with what I did not find. Are there any plans for space allocation for articles dealing with congregational life and enrichment, i.e. homiletics, UFMCC worship designs, hymnody familiarization, budget preparation, wills and estate planning, etc?

Fellowship happenings, thought-provoking articles and gay community news have their place in IN UNITY; but, many churches in the field are lacking in resource helps to accommodate their year around ministry.

Many in our Fellowship oppose the financial support of other denominations. Perhaps if you can find a way to incorporate UFMCC designed Christian Education materials, we can start spending our money at home. Or better yet, save our money because you have provided the resources. Love and Prayers,
Kerry Brown

